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TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF LIBERATION:
"AN APPROACH TO PEACE AND JUSTICE IN THE THIRD WORLD

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of the
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of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Religion

by
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is a statement of the obvious to say that the world today is in a state of violent ferment. The news media are full of stories of wars, revolutions and other serious disturbances. At present the situation in Ireland has replaced, in the public eye, the recent bloody turmoil in Bangladesh where an estimated three million people have been killed and where there occurred the displacement of a staggering ten million refugees. The Viet Nam war continues and guerilla movements, both urban and rural, flourish all over the Third World as well as in parts of the developed world. Guerilla war is so prevalent now, and it seems that it will increase in the future, that Francois Sully proclaims these to be the years of the "Age of the Guerilla."¹

In the twenty-four years between 1945, the end of World War II, and 1969 there have been fifty-five wars of significant size, intensity and duration. This averages out to roughly one war in every five months. If coups, major riots and other armed disturbances of large proportion are figured into this accounting, the average rises to slightly more than one incident per month.² We are talking here of

¹Francois Sully, *Age of the Guerilla* (New York: Avon, 1968), p. 9.

²George Thayer, *The War Business* (New York: Avon, 1969), p. 17.

incidents which have significant impact on the course of history.

Geoffrey Kemp estimates the number of sovereign states so involved to be over seventy, that is more than half the nations of the world.³

This high incidence of major conflict is distressing enough in itself. It becomes more distressing, however, on taking a closer look. Of the fifty-five significant wars referred to above, fifty-three, that is all but two, have been fought in the Third World.⁴ Furthermore, these have not always been private wars between Third World nations. Many of them have actually been wars by proxy, i.e. wars between Western and Communist blocs through third parties, as for example, in Viet Nam and the Middle East. Some have been direct wars of suppression and/or intervention by major powers into the nations of the Third World, as for example, Great Britain and France in the Suez, France in Algeria and the U.S.A. in the Dominican Republic. It has been only a small proportion of these wars that have been between Third World Nations themselves. However, whatever type of war it was, much in the way of precious resources, which could have been better used in development projects, education, housing and other necessary programs, has thus been wastefully diverted.

This is the most obvious, most easily observable sort of violence. Less in the public eye, because of its shadowy nature, is the violence characteristic of what has already been referred to as the

³Geoffrey Kemp, "Arms Traffic and Third World Conflicts," *International Conciliation* (March 1970), 5.

⁴Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

"Age of the Guerilla." If one were to look at a world map, in terms of the presence and activity of guerilla groups, it would seem that the whole world was in flames. Almost every Latin American country has now, or has had until recently, active guerilla movements. Northward in the U.S.A. and Canada guerillas protest the Viet Nam war or fight for separation of French Canada from predominantly Anglo-Saxon Canada. Move east and one finds a well organised and active movement in the Irish Republican Army. Southward is Spain and Basque Nationalists while even further south, in Rhodesia, South Africa, South West Africa, Ethiopia, and the Portuguese colonies, guerilla movements are to be found in operation. Move eastward again and one now finds Asian guerillas, Palestinians, victorious Mukti Bahini Bengalis and Viet Cong. And one could search on and on before coming up with a complete list of guerilla movements. On closer look at this type of violence and the configuration of its incidence one again finds the distressing concentration of it in the Third World.

In pondering the reasons for such sorts of violence, there are those who say that all that they point to is a breakdown of law and order. The best cure would be a crackdown of police type action. The result of such a crackdown would be the reimposition of law and order, the reestablishment of peace. The present attitude of the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia is a case in point, where freedom fighters and protesters are referred to as terrorists or bandits who are to be somehow neutralised. The United States was to react in similar fashion, to the turmoil within Viet Nam and in the Dominican Republic, and play

the role of policeman.

There are others who see the overt violence embodied in war and revolution to be the symptom rather than the problem. The problem, they would say, is some form or another of systemic or structural violence. This is where unjust systems or structures of society, nationally or internationally speaking, have evil effects on those who are at the bottom of the social order. Thus, for example, the Kerner Commission came to report, at great length, that the root cause for the large scale rioting in American cities in 1966 and 1967 was the structural violence of a social system which discriminated against people, and thus deprived them of a better life, on the basis of their racial background. This was found to be more responsible for the rioting than a disrespect for law and order.⁵ In colonial Algeria Frantz Fanon, on similar lines, scored the brutality of the colonial system as the real violence. In fact he went further and saw the violence of the revolting oppressed as a humanising, cleansing force. "It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect."⁶

This school of thought then would say that it is the systemic, structural violence of the situations of prevailing injustice that is the fundamental violence. It is more important to understand and deal

⁵National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, *Report* (New York: Bantam, 1968).

⁶Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), p. 94.

with this fundamental violence than repressing the protest of it which is actually a humanising movement.

When looking at the Third World today we can see this systemic or structural violence operating on two levels. These are the international and national levels. On the international level the violence is best seen and understood in terms of the growing gap between the rich and poor nations, the developed and the developing nations. Nuclear war and universal conflagration is fading as the major cause of fear. Those who have the bombs have too much to lose in the event of nuclear war. The real danger in world war lies elsewhere. It lies in the failure to deal with the problem of the dehumanisation, starvation and poverty of the majority of the world's population. Emilio Castro of Uruguay sees it this way when he says that

. . . the real danger of a spark that can explode world conflagration is found in hunger, in oppression, in the marginalisation of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and some minorities within the industrialised countries.⁷

Josué de Castro also agrees with this and says that the most permanent and vigorous factors in the terrible tensions of the present lie in the economic imbalance of the world and in hunger.⁸ He continues saying that two-thirds of mankind lives with undernutrition and he likens the underdeveloped countries, where this malnutrition is

⁷Excerpt from an address by Emilio Castro on "Justice and Peace," delivered at the World Methodist Conference at Denver, 21st August 1971.

⁸Josué de Castro, *The Black Book of Hunger* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), p. 5.

rampant, to huge peacetime concentration camps. Hunger is "the whip and chains of the slaves of our civilisation."⁹ The impact of de Castro's words is even greater when we realise, that of the sixty million annual deaths in the world, between thirty and forty million deaths are attributed to malnutrition.¹⁰ The contrast between the rich and poor nations become more striking when de Castro divides the world into two groups of human beings:

. . . those who do not eat and those who do not sleep. The group of those who do not eat lives in the poor countries and believes that it is crushed by economic oppression of the great industrialised powers. The group of those who do not sleep lives in the world's richest areas, but the fear inspired in them by the rebellion of those who do not eat prevents them from sleeping.¹¹

The picture painted so far is gross enough in itself. It is gross till one becomes aware that the part of the world that eats, overeats. It is concerned with slimming cures, corsets and health spas while the rest of the world is concerned with getting something to eat to assuage its burning hunger. Consumption has become a virtue rather than a necessity in the affluent society. As John Galbraith observes,

More die in the United States of too much food than of too little. Where the population was once thought to press on the food supply, now the food supply presses relentlessly on the population.¹²

This nutrition gap between the rich and poor nations is,

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²John Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1958), p. 123.

however, only a part of the total picture. There is the international structure of neo-colonialism, a most pernicious form of oppression. The colonial era of political domination, with a few exceptions, has come to an end. And yet, with political independence, the Third World is still not free. With neo-colonialism, imperialism is in its final and, perhaps, its most dangerous stage. Neo-colonialism is best described as the stage in which

. . . the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.¹³

This outside influence may be a state or a consortium of financial interests, the so-called multinational or international corporation, not readily identifiable with any particular state. Nkrumah goes on to say that it is the worst form of imperialism as "for those who practise it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it it means exploitation without redress."¹⁴

Under this violent international structure countries of the Third World are forced to sell raw materials to the rich nations cheaply and to buy manufactured goods most expensively. The price for such goods represents in Bolivia, for example, ten, twenty and even thirty times the average work per hour, per man which is paid to the

¹³Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (New York: International, 1966), p. ix.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. xi.

Bolivian worker.¹⁵ The upshot of all of this is to make the rich nations richer and the poor nations poorer.

As things stand right now, 20 per cent of the world's population controls 80 per cent of the world's wealth. The rich North Atlantic nations annually add to their existing wealth more than the entire income available to all other continents. Each year their income grows by three per cent or approximately not less than \$60,000 million. India with over 500 million people has a national income of only two-thirds this sum which represents merely the increase in income. All of Latin America has a combined national income of a little above \$60,000 million.¹⁶ And the gap is growing bigger.

Much more can be said of this growing gap and much more documentation could be brought to bear in support. I will, however, let what has already been said suffice and will move on to examining how systemic violence operates on the national level in most of the Third World countries. This violence is often referred to as internal colonialism.

Internal colonialism may simply be defined as the exploitation and marginalisation of the masses by privileged minorities. These minorities live in comfort and luxury while the masses live in the slavery of subhuman conditions. As there is a huge gap between the

¹⁵From "Manifesto to the Nation" presented to the President of Bolivia by the Methodist Evangelical Church of Bolivia on Easter, 29th March 1970.

¹⁶Barbara Ward, *The Lopsided World* (New York: Norton, 1968), pp. 11f.

rich metropolitan nations of the North Atlantic and the satellitised nations of the Third World, so also there is a metropolitan-satellite relation, with its accompanying gap in wealth, between the privileged national minorities and the exploited masses.¹⁷ And so a handful of families absorbs the lions share of the national wealth while the rest have to make do with whatever is left. In Mexico, for example, one of the more prosperous of the Latin American nations, it is estimated that 50 per cent of the population receives only 15 per cent of the national income while a mere 1 per cent of the population receives 66 per cent.¹⁸ Similar figures with slight variation would be true for most of the Third World nations.

And so in the Third World, because of these prevailing conditions of structural violence, the masses live in the slavery of sub-human conditions. Their lives are characterised by extreme poverty, by the absence of any decent shelter, by malnutrition and gnawing hunger, by indecent clothing, disease and ignorance. There is a high incidence of unemployment and illiteracy. All that is obvious is a seeming tunnel of darkness ahead where a genuine hope for future improvement is lacking. All that is ahead is the prospect of an early, ignominious death. In short there is no freedom for the exercising of

¹⁷For a fuller treatment of this concept of metropolis-satellite relationship read André Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York: Modern Reader, 1969).

¹⁸André Gunder Frank, *Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution* (New York: Modern Reader, 1970), p. 300.

a full humanity, where one's full God-given potentiality can be realised. As Dom Helder Camara, bishop of Olinda and Recife in Brazil, puts it so well,

. . . certain preliminary conditions are essential if the human person is to express himself, if intelligence and liberty are to have any value. For anyone who lives in a state of undernourishment, of chronic diseases, of ignorance and despair, everything atrophies, human dignity, intelligence, the sense of personal freedom.¹⁹

Camara goes on to question the concept of the inclusion of the Third World countries in the so-called free world and the fighting of wars in Korea and Viet Nam to protect their "freedom."

The developed nations, who defend 'the free world' or 'the liberty of the world' by going to war in underdeveloped lands, with the ideal of liberating them from the slavery of communism, should learn from Paul VI that poverty is also a slavery, and that freedom is an empty word for two-thirds of humanity.²⁰

Let us now take stock of what has been said so far. The present human situation is rife with violence. Open warfare is a common occurrence mainly taking place in the Third World. This is also the "Age of Guerilla Warfare." Some see this situation as a breakdown of law and order and would use police-type methods to deal with it. Others, myself included, see this situation as symptomatic of the more fundamental violence of oppressive, exploitative structures of society on both international and national levels. These structures serve only to dehumanise and marginalise the masses in the Third World,

¹⁹ Dom Helder Camara, *The Church and Colonialism: The Betrayal of the Third World* (Danville, N.J.: Dimension, 1969), p. 41f.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

especially, but also some minority groups in the rich, developed countries. Dealing with the rest causes of unjust systems and structures would be a more valid approach to dealing with the violence than would be police action directed at preserving the unjust law and order. The cemeteries of Hitler and Stalin are filled with the victims of this approach. Law and order was thus preserved but justice and real peace were raped. It is time, therefore, that we pay attention to dealing with the causes rather than the symptoms and that we pay attention to the liberation of human beings from conditions which deny them their humanity.

It is time now to ask the questions, "What is the relation of the church to the dehumanisation of the peoples of the Third World?" "What does it have to say and do with regard to peace and justice in the Third World?"

The answer to these questions is rather a sad one. By and large the church has not been a liberating force in the world but has tended instead to be concerned only with the spiritual dimension of man and not the whole man. The emphasis in the main has been other-worldly and not this-worldly. The church has not realised fully that the Gospel is not preached to abstract beings without limitation of time and space. When it has preached of divine grace it has forgotten that divine life is being proclaimed to people living in subhuman conditions. The persistence in pure spiritual evangelising prompts one to wonder whether the gospel religion is a theory separated from life, incapable of touching it. It forgets that we are not pure

spirits.²¹

José Miguez Bonino states that the error of this sort of theology and doctrine of man is that it sees liberation as "the emancipation of the soul from all care, appetites and ambitions, from the body and the world in order to dedicate one's self to contemplation and communion with God."²² Thus liberation is always related to a flight from the objective world.

This basic error is compounded further by the church's teaching of a religion which Marx labeled as the opiate of the people. In this teaching, explanations of mystical, philosophic and religious nature are given so as to lead man to accept his alienated situation and to adapt to it in a "comfortable" state. Man's alienated situation is not one caused purely by an internal break or a transcendental fall but rather a false relation to the world, a relation in which man tries to escape to the other world rather than to deal with this one. This is what the religion taught by the church encourages man to do. Hence instead of attempting to transform, the church's teachings tries to explain. In so doing it has failed to deal with man's alienation and with the causes of it.²³ Thus, for example, much of the theology of the black church in the U.S.A. encouraged its oppressed people to bear the injustice of their oppressed position because of the golden life to come in the hereafter, in the other-worldly paradise. They were

²¹*Ibid.*, pp. 19f.

²²José Miguez Bonino, "Theology and Liberation," in *Isal Abstracts*, III:26, p. 3.

²³*Ibid.*

taught to ignore their earthly injustice in return for their heavenly justice.

Unfortunately, the error of the church did not stop at this theoretical level. The church has also been a party to the dehumanisation of the Third World. It has actively allied itself with dehumanising structures, indeed it has even sometimes been a part of such structures. It has stood too, too often for the status quo regardless of how rampant with injustice it was. It has even cooperated with those who have plundered the Third World. For example, during the colonial days in Africa, the church never identified itself with the African Independence movement. It was either silent and indifferent or in many cases stood for the status quo of the power structure of the colonialists, irrespective of their imperialist, dictatorial and colonial excesses. It preached obedience to these structures of colonialism on the part of the African underdog. It extolled

. . . the virtue of turning the other cheek, of ignoring and forgetting earthly justice in return for heavenly justice, of taking it to Our Lord in prayer and embracing the Bible, while the colonial power embraced the land and bled the land of its vital natural resources.²⁴

In China, the missionaries sailed on the same ships with the opium smugglers unloading Bibles along with the opium--I wouldn't know whether Marx had this in mind when he spoke of religion as the opiate of the people. Sir John Bowring, author and hymnwriter, published

²⁴ Excerpted from an address by the Honourable John J. Akar, ex-Ambassador of Sierra Leone to the U.S.A., on "Church and Race," delivered at the World Methodist Conference at Denver on the 19th August 1971.

his hymns in a volume entitled *Hymns of 1825*. In his political life he was, among other things, Consul of Canton, Governor of Hong Kong and Chief Superintendent of the China Trade. He was to play a part in the Opium War of 1839-42 in which his government was attempting to force China to allow the sale of opium in their land. His favourite hymn which is included in the Methodist hymnal goes thus: "In the Cross of Christ I glory, Towering over the wrecks of time."²⁵

More recently, in the early 1960's, the church in Cuba opposed the reforms instituted by Revolution and sided with the tyrannical status quo. This was done under the slogan of anti-communism, a convenient slogan often used to combat social change.²⁶

Elsewhere, in Colombia, Brazil and South Africa, the church is allied with the forces of tyranny and slavery. Emilio Castro reports that at the World Conference of Religion and Peace in Tokyo in October of 1970, the Christians were considered members of the Western world and hence guilty of the economic exploitation and cultural trampling under foot that the Western colonising effort has meant, carrying with it a varnish of Christianity.²⁷

I have personally heard such accusations by non-Christian Indians. Their rejection of Christianity is based on the practise of

²⁵Robert G. McCutchan, *Our Hymnody* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1937), pp. 106 and 186.

²⁶Leslie Dewart, *Christianity and Revolution* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1963).

²⁷Castro, *op. cit.*

racism in the United States churches. They say that Christianity is a religion which encourages racialism. In short, all over the Third World there is an attitude towards what has been passing as Christianity, which is reflected in the title of the book by Dom Helder Camara, from which I have already quoted, *The Church and Colonialism: The Betrayal of the Third World*.²⁸

And so example after example can be found to show this negative role of the church. The evidence is too massive for the church to plead innocent to its role in the dehumanising of the Third World peoples. Even if, in some instances, it could plead innocent to active involvement, it still cannot plead innocent to its indifference to the plight of the suffering of the Third World.

I have painted a dark picture indeed but I feel it is time that we as Christians face the fact that the picture is a dark one. Our record has been very poor. There have been sterling exceptions, of course, of individual prophets crying in the wilderness of despair. I would not be presenting the total picture if I did not mention this fact. These prophets have been few in number but they have had impact. They have come out of this same church we have just been talking about and this is a source of joy and hope. The church does also produce some prophets. There is even at least one case of a whole national church, rather than a few scattered individuals in it, which has identified itself powerfully, in more than words, with the task of

²⁸Camara, *op. cit.*

carrying the Gospel message of the liberation of the whole man to the people. I refer here to the Methodist Evangelical Church of Bolivia.

What then is the status of the Gospel of Liberation? It is alive. Out of the dark conditions of dehumanisation in the Third World, or possibly because of them, there has been a growing rediscovery of the theology of liberation. Because of the Third World reality, and the belief that the Gospel speaks to reality, we are rediscovering a theology of liberation of the total man. We are hearing a host of people, such as José Miguez Bonino, Helmut Gollwitzer and James Cone, to name just a few, saying that Christianity is essentially a religion of liberation and that a theology which is undressed to this theme of liberation is not Christian theology.²⁹ Cone goes on to say that

. . . theology ceases to be a theology of the gospel when it fails to arise out of the community of the oppressed. For it is impossible to speak of the God of Israelite history, who is the God who revealed himself in Jesus Christ, without recognising that he is the God *of* and *for* those who labour and are heavy laden.³⁰

What is this liberation that we are talking about? As I understand it liberation applies to the whole man and not merely to any one of his dimensions. Furthermore, it applies to the whole man in those concrete conditions in which he exists, the world so to speak. Liberation then is the full freedom of man to develop his God-given

²⁹Read Bonino, *op. cit.*; Helmut Gollwitzer, *The Rich Christians and Poor Lazarus* (New York: Macmillan, 1970); and James Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970).

³⁰Cone, *op. cit.*, pp. 17f.

potentiality, his spiritual, his historical, his material, his social and his individual being. A society which facilitates such development facilitates justice and hence peace. A society which prevents such development, either totally or even in certain aspects of the whole man, stifles liberation. It thus frustrates justice and promotes violence.

Statement of Purpose

We now come to my purpose in this dissertation. I strongly subscribe to the view which holds that Christian theology must concern itself with the liberation of the oppressed of humanity. I also believe that it is only through such liberation that true Peace and Justice can be established.

I will here, therefore, be examining the theme of liberation as it appears in some chosen writings which have been concerned with this problem. These, specifically, are the writings of Camilo Torres, Colin Morris, Ruben Alves and the reports of the World Conference on Church and Society held in Geneva in 1966 and of the Conference on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX) held at Beirut in 1968. I will then show how I relate to the question of liberation. I will finally suggest, in an appendix, an educational model for use in the local church. The purpose of this model is to promote greater understanding of the realities of the Third World situation and to provoke thinking about the implications of such understanding for Christians. With slight adaptation to the particular location of the local church, this model could be used both in the Third World and in the world's

richer regions.

CHAPTER II

CAMILO TORRES

In Latin America today, the majority of countries are ruled without the mandate of their people. Justice is an empty word. The majority of people live in the violence of the subhuman conditions of poverty, malnutrition, disease, ignorance and the lack of the conditions necessary for a decent life. Despair rather than hope prevails. In contrast to the hopeless majority there lives a privileged minority, an elite in whom almost all the power--political, economic and social--is collected. With these also goes the power of the military. This power is liberally used to keep the structures unchanged so that the exploitation of the masses may continue for the benefit of the elite. Furthermore, this power is strengthened, whenever necessary, with support from the United States under the arrangements of the Organisation of American States, merely by raising the spectre of communism. The prospects for meaningful, peaceful change through the normal channels, if such channels exist at all, are almost nil. There are notable exceptions, of course, where peaceful, meaningful change is possible. Mexico, Costa Rica and Chile immediately come to mind as examples. Yet even in these nations exploitation of the masses does take place but it must be said that movements for change do not meet with oppressive counter measures as would be the case in most Latin American nations.

This, then, is the present day reality in most of Latin

America. In fact it has been so since the colonial days. This is the reality to which Camilo Torres was born and in which he was to become the apostle of revolutionary Christianity. It was to this reality that he attempted to speak and it was within this reality that he was to develop his theology of liberation. It is not a mere reproduction of academic theology but is related to the facts of life in his country of Colombia. His theology is a critical reflection on the political, economic and social situation in Colombia. It can therefore be best understood only in that context. Let us then, with this in mind, briefly examine the man, Camilo Torres, and his theology. To do this best let us enter into the reality from which both came.

On the 3rd February, 1929 Camilo Torres was born in Bogota, Colombia into one of Colombia's more illustrious families. His father, Calixto Torres Amana, was a well-known doctor who for a time served as a scientific consultant to the League of Nations in Geneva. His mother, Isabel Restrepo Gaviria came from one of the aristocratic families of Colombia, counting among her ancestors the emancipator of Colombia's slaves and among her relatives the President of Colombia from 1966 to 1970.¹

In the years that followed Camilo enjoyed the many privileges that went with his class. He traveled, went to the best of schools and had private tutors. Even at a young age he exhibited nationalistic tendencies, getting into a fight with a German boy who spoke badly of

¹John Gerassi, "Introduction," in Camilo Torres, *Revolutionary Priest* (New York: Random House, 1971), pp. 14f. and 15.

Colombia in his presence. He was a rebel even then and when in high school he edited a periodical in which he was often highly critical of some of his professors.²

He graduated with honours from high school at the top of his class, respected by both his fellow students and his professors. He entered law school for a while but after coming in contact with some French Dominicans decided to enter seminary.³ He went on to study sociology at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium after his ordination. While there his interest in Christian social action grew and often he was torn between his interest in his sociological research and his desire to be involved in action. He got actively involved with Abbé Pierre, a priest who ministered to the poor and homeless while living with them as they did, in abandoned houses, in the streets and under bridges.⁴

Torres obtained his masters degree and for a while thereafter stayed on at Louvain as the vice-rector of the Latin American College. In 1958, he returned to Colombia to do his doctoral dissertation research on the socio-economic conditions of Bogotá. But he never did finish his doctorate; although he completed his dissertation, he never defended it.⁵

²Excerpted from an interview with Isabel Restrepo de Torres quoted in German Guzman, *Camilo Torres* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1969), p. 4.

³Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 19f.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 20.

Soon after his return to Bogotá he was appointed to a lectureship at the National University. The next year, 1959, along with Dr. Orlando Fals Borda he founded the faculty of sociology at the National University.⁶ He was by now also chaplain of the University. John Gerassi marks this as the point at which Torres began actively to involve himself in

. . . the struggle of his countrymen for liberation--first, as a sociologist, then as a politician, finally as a revolutionary, and always, in his own eyes at least, as a priest.⁷

It must be underlined that Torres always considered himself a priest. His priesthood began with his decision to enter it. It continued through his ordination, his studies in Louvain, his professorship and chaplaincy at the National University, his increasing volume of writings and speeches. It then flowered into political activity, into prophetic denunciation of the oligarchy, into the leadership of the United Front and finally to guerilla warfare and death. Even after his reduction to the lay state Torres considered himself a priest. For him priesthood extended beyond his right to wear a cassock and his right to celebrate the Mass. As he once said to a group of journalists, "I took off my cassock to be more truly a priest."⁸ Elsewhere he explains that he saw his laicisation as nothing else but a temporary sacrifice of the opportunity to celebrate Mass so that he could work towards making the cult more authentic.⁹ He writes

⁶Guzman, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁷Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁹Camilo Torres, *Revolutionary Writings* (New York: Herder and

When circumstances impede men from devoting themselves to Christ, the priest's proper duty is to combat these circumstances, even at the cost of being able to celebrate the eucharistic rite, which has no meaning without the devotion of Christians.¹⁰

Hence Torres was still a priest in his understanding, although unfrocked and unable to celebrate the Mass. He saw all of his words and deeds to be Christian devotion. This understanding would be supported by many. As one such person, James Petras, puts it, "The sources cited by Camilo and the mode of expression were distinctly Christian."¹¹

Having taken this initial look at Torres, and having become aware that all he did and wrote was permeated by distinctly Christian understandings, let us now get into his theology of liberation as it appears in his writings and messages. The first set of these are his sociological works.

Torres saw the study of social problems as most important for Christians. As he writes

The fact that social concern coalesces so perfectly with Christian concern implicitly indicates the prudence which Catholics must possess and practice in regard to social questions.¹²

Torres practised this belief himself and has become a sociologist of note. Gerassi is of the opinion that it is as a sociologist

Herder, 1969), p. 164.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 163.

¹¹James Petras, "Revolution and Guerilla Movements in Latin America: Venezuela, Colombia, Guatemala and Peru," in James Petras and Maurice Zeitlin (eds.), *Latin America--Reform or Revolution?* (New York: Fawcett, 1968), p. 335f.

¹²Torres, *Revolutionary Writings*, p. 14.

that Torres is taken most seriously in academia today.¹³

His earliest sociological writings, in 1958, resulted from his research for his doctoral dissertation. These consisted of a study of Bogotá and they give us an insight into the social, economic and political factors present in its makeup. He notes the European colonial influence on Bogotá and its institutions. Because of this influence

Latin Americans have received rather than generated the new economic, social and political systems. This reception has generally occurred in a wholly indiscriminate manner, with no respect for the existing culture and no process of assimilation.¹⁴

This serves only to add to the acuteness of the tension and conflict already involved in social change.

This was followed in 1960 by a lecture on land reform in Colombia. In it Torres advocated the use of cooperatives as the basis of agrarian reform. He also cautioned against a simple copying by Colombia of other agrarian reform measures in other nations, regardless of their success in those nations. He felt that the reality of Colombia would not necessarily correspond to their realities; i.e. those foreign methods would not necessarily also be right for Colombia. He noted that the indiscriminate transplantation of other foreign institutions into Colombian life, without regard to Colombia's reality, had brought only 'harsh results.'¹⁵

¹³Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁴Torres, *Revolutionary Writings*, pp. 16f.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 23ff.

In these writings Torres was moving towards a position of advocating the structuring of an authentic Latin American sociology. This he actually did in a paper that he presented in September of 1961 to the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences at Buenos Aires. He wanted to structure such a sociology so as to liberate Latin American Sociology from the cultural imperialism of sociology and sociologists coming from Europe and North America. This cultural imperialism is cloaked by the insistence on the so-called universality of science. He wanted, instead, a sociological methodology which could effectively analyse and interpret specific Latin American problems and apply methods and theories to these problems. He also attacked what he called "timidity disguised as objectivity" and "demagoguery concealed by apparent scientific significance."¹⁶ Instead of merely studying non-transcendental problems as the only way to be objective, he believed that one could scientifically affirm

. . . that there are not sufficient reasons to refuse consideration of those problems which matter most to our society. Those problems include social revolution, social change, the sociological effects of agrarian reform, the development of community, and the expansion of imperialism, and those should constitute the present agenda of study for Latin American sociologists.¹⁷

I believe that Torres exhibited great perception and correctness in these assertions. He was thus to precede, among many others, two prominent Latin American social scientists in Orlando Fals Borda and André Gunder Frank. These two would agree with him on the charge that

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 31.

Western sociology is culturally imperialistic and non-applicable to Latin American reality. Borda feels that this derives basically from the fact that Western sociology is based on an equilibrium model of society, something not obtaining in the Latin American situation. The transplanting of this model to Latin America does nothing but obscure the realities, for Latin America is a society in disequilibrium.¹⁸

Borda would also agree with Torres that neutrality and so-called objectivity on the part of social scientists is nothing but timidity disguised. This is because neutrality boils down to nothing but commitment to the status quo. He calls, therefore, for a sociology committed to development and social change.¹⁹

Frank's criticism of Western sociology is also strong and is consistent with that of Torres though it goes further. Frank feels that this sociology is empirically invalid when confronted with reality and is ineffective in pursuing its supposed intentions.²⁰ He calls instead for a sociology that comes to terms with Latin American history and reality, that reflects the structures that operate in this reality, and that helps the people of Latin America towards true development and change. Western sociology is seen by him as the emperor's clothing

¹⁸Orlando Fals Borda in an address entitled "The Ideological Biases of North Americans Studying Latin America," delivered to the New York Group of the University Christian Movement, 2nd December 1966.

¹⁹*Ibid.* See also Borda's article "Sociology in the Face of Crisis," in *Isal Abstracts*, III:20-21.

²⁰André Gunder Frank, *Latin America Underdevelopment or Revolution* (New York: Modern Reader, 1970), p. 21.

that hides his naked imperialism. This must be stripped away.²¹

In evaluating Torres' sociological writings, John Gerassi feels that at this point Camilo wanted, but could not as yet formulate, a committed sociology.²² (This is something which horrifies Western scientists but, as we have seen, it is something that Latin Americans, such as Borda and Frank, advocate as necessary.) He goes on to state that Camilo in these and other of his important sociological writings was still very traditional, very much in the mold of the Western scientists. He was not yet a revolutionary. "He was at best a reformist, radical for Colombia, but liberal in his problem-solving-by-experts approach."²³

In identifying the elements of Torres' theology of liberation as they appear so far in his sociological writings, in terms of chronology up to 1963, three main elements are to be seen. Firstly, Torres feels that it is important that Christians study social problems because the Gospel has social implications, i.e. there is a coalescing of social with Christian concern. Secondly, Torres wants Christians to take a holistic view of man, i.e. "As Christians we must accept man in his fullness--body and soul, matter and spirit, the socio-economic factor and the human factor."²⁴ Finally Torres rejects the cultural imperialism of Western sociology and calls for the liberation of Latin

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 78.

²²Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

²³*Ibid.*, pp. 22f.

²⁴Torres, *Revolutionary Writings*, p. 24.

American sociology from it. He advocates the structuring of a sociology that is authentically Latin American in nature, and properly and usefully applicable to the reality of Latin America.

From 1964 onwards Torres gradually moved from sociologist to full time political activist. His theology of liberation appears in, and sees further development in, what are basically his political writings. It also is further developed in more avowedly Christian ethical and theological writings where he approached specific problems related to Colombian reality out of the Judeo-Christian tradition. In other words these are basically works of theological reflection on specific situations obtaining in the present reality. His reflections on "The Christian Apostolate and Economic Programming"²⁵ is an example of this. As José Miguez Bonino would put it, this theological writing was critical reflection on the political, historical praxis.²⁶ I am trying here to distinguish between basically political thinking with theological implications and basically theological writing with political implications. Let us briefly examine the theme of liberation as it appears in both of these types of writings.

In 1962 Torres was catapulted into the political scene when he objected to the dismissal of ten student leaders of a student strike, without hearings. The rector called him a clown, the students elected him rector and his superior, the Cardinal Primate, asked him to resign

²⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 103-144.

²⁶From José Miguez Bonino in a lecture and personal conversation at the School of Theology, Claremont, California, 17th Feb. 1972.

from the University. Torres resigned in obedience and assumed the position of Dean of the Institute of Social Administration, a part of the School of Public Administration.²⁷

In this position Torres then became involved in the Colombian Institute of Agrarian Social Reform. He became more and more aware, both through personal observation and through research data that passed through his hands, of the subhuman conditions of life of rural dwellers. All of this served to fill him with rebellion against the situation and to inflame his desire to involve himself in immediate and effective action. This is marked as the point at which he took his place in the movement of the people.²⁸ This is also the point at which he began to clash more frequently with the ecclesiastical hierarchy and at which charges were leveled against him that he had become a communist.²⁹

The Paper on "The Christian Apostolate and Economic Planning" is Torres' first major attempt to reflect theologically on the meaning and role of Christian in the social, economic and political reality that attained in the Third World. Gerassi comments that by the time this paper was presented Torres

. . . was clearly convinced that capitalism retarded genuine growth. Yet in that speech he was still advocating liberal-socialist reforms, not genuine structural changes.³⁰

²⁷Torres, *Revolutionary Writings*, p. 37.

²⁸Guzman, *op. cit.*, pp. 36f.

²⁹Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 25.

Torres did, however, propose some rather important considerations about the Christian apostolate. He saw it as an activity directed to establish and extend the kingdom of God so that all men may have supernatural life and have it abundantly. Thus apostolic work is everything that leads towards others possessing supernatural life.³¹ He adds

We cannot have supernatural life without charity and our charity must be efficacious. Charity is essentially supernatural life. But if we are to have real charity, real love must necessarily exist in our hearts. The good works we do to help our neighbour are indispensable if this love is to be authentic. Therefore inefficacious charity is not charity at all.³²

Camilo does not here fall into the trap of a theology emphasising mere works. His is a theology of both works and grace. Receiving the sacraments without performing good works or performing good works without grace are worth nothing to him. One should culminate in the other.³³

Finally, Torres in his paper called for collaboration with the Marxists in the seeking of common good. He felt that when the aims of Christians and Marxists coincided in the seeking of such good, it would be better to collaborate rather than oppose each other and thus weaken the search for the common good.³⁴

Torres grew in the conviction that a united front by these Colombians who were denied decision-making power by the oligarchies

³¹Torres, *Revolutionary Writings*, pp. 103f.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 105.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 106.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 133.

was politically a necessity. He drafted a platform for such a front, a platform which he hoped would be useful in uniting the Colombian popular classes on the basis of concrete objectives. This platform was discussed, approved and amended and was then publicly presented by Torres to the Colombian people on the 22nd May 1965.³⁵ At the time of its presentation he made a statement officially declaring himself a revolutionary. His listing of reasons for this decision give us a good insight into his theology of liberation. He claimed he was a revolutionary as a Colombian, as a sociologist, as a Christian and as a priest.

As a Colombian because he could not disregard the struggles of the people.

As a sociologist because through his scientific knowledge of reality he had reached the conviction that technical and effective solutions could not be achieved without a revolution.

As a Christian because the essence of Christianity is the love of neighbour, and only by revolution could the good of the majority be achieved.

As a priest because devotion to one's neighbour, which the revolution requires, was a requisite of fraternal charity and indispensable for complete fulfillment of his mission.³⁶

It must be noted though that while he called himself a revolutionary he did not see himself as a violent one. He wanted to achieve the revolution by peaceful means if possible. Whether the revolution took a peaceful or violent form was in the hands of the ruling class and depended on their foresight to make the necessary structural reforms.³⁷

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Chapter XV.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 148f.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

By mid-1965 Torres began to see the greater possibility and even necessity for revolutionary violence. In a speech on 15th June 1965, Torres warned against the reactionary violence of the oligarchy and did not rule out violence from the Christian ethic as a response. It would be true to the ethic "to be violent once and for all in order to destroy the violence which the economic minorities exercise against the people."³⁸ These minorities he defined as 24 Colombian families who enjoyed most of the wealth of Colombia not controlled by North American corporations. He then called for the liberation of the masses from their exploited situation. "Not one step back. Down with Yankee imperialism. Long live the revolution. Away with the oligarchies. Power for the people unto death."³⁹

Things began to move rapidly then. Camilo was laicised at his request on the 26th of June. He was condemned by his cardinal as having irreconcilable differences with the doctrine of the church.⁴⁰ He worked towards building up the United Front but was frustrated by constant factionalism and sectarianism between various member groups of the front. He worked on, campaigning, striking, marching in picket lines, suffering beatings and jailings by the police. The Christian Democrats abandoned him because of his laicisation. In defense he protested that he took off his cassock only to be more truly a priest.

³⁸Torres, quoted in Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Cardinal Concha quoted in Guzman, *op. cit.*, pp. 124, 129f.

He felt that not to be a revolutionary in the face of the Colombian reality would amount to living in mortal sin.⁴¹

On the 18th October 1965, Camilo Torres took the step which carried his revolutionary Christianity to its logical conclusion. He joined the armed revolution and began to serve as a guerilla soldier in the Army of National Liberation in the mountains of Colombia. There on the 15th February, 1966 he was killed while fighting.⁴²

Instead of my summarising the various elements contained in Camilo Torres' theology of liberation, I will let him do so for himself. He best capsulates his theology of liberation in the following passage.

I have given up the duties and privileges of the clergy but I have not ceased to be a priest. I believe that I joined the Revolution out of love of my neighbour. I have stopped saying Mass in order to fulfill this love of neighbour in the temporal, economic and social world. When my neighbour no longer holds anything against me, when the Revolution has been completed, I will return to offering Mass, God permitting. I think that in this way I follow Christ's injunction: 'If you bring your offering to the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there and go; first make peace with your brother and then come and present your offering.'⁴³

In trying to evaluate Torres' theology of liberation we see that it is basically fairly similar in content to the theology of many others, as for example Dom Helder Camara or José Miguez Bonino. All three would agree that the Christian must take a holistic view of man. They would agree that the Gospel has social, economic and political

⁴¹Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 30f.

⁴³Torres, *Revolutionary Writings*, p. 173.

implications, that it must speak to the liberation of men from sub-human conditions. Furthermore they would agree that this would have to be a project rather than an explanation and that Christians should actively work for removal of dehumanising structures. They would, however, disagree on the best method to achieve this liberation. Torres' uniqueness lies in his opting for violent armed revolution, not as a mere theoretical possibility but as an actual strategy for changing structure so as to obtain justice and hence peace. It would be a mistake either to romanticise or to condemn him for his opting for guerilla warfare. It would be more constructive to understand why he did so.

Torres' violence was a strategy rather than a guiding principle to be regularly followed and this arose out of his understanding of Colombian reality. We have earlier already seen that he saw violence as a way to destroy once and for all the violent and unjust structures maintained by those in power. It was their refusal to initiate structural reforms which left the suffering masses no other option but violence. Violence is hence only a last resort to be used when other channels fail.

Juan Garcia Elorrio would agree with Torres' reading of the Colombian situation saying that Torres

. . . satisfied his thirst for justice by joining the armed struggle when he understood that the oligarchy shuts all roads and confronts the people with its ultimate weapon-- violence.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Juan Garcia Elorrio, quoted in Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

James Petras sees in the history of Torres a highlighting of what is the existing political process in Colombia, i.e.

. . . armed struggle as the means to social change in Colombia is a result of the ability of the government to impose its repression on peaceful political movements in an urban environment, while the marginal charges of the government serve only to buttress a highly authoritarian elite ridden society.⁴⁵

All things considered, I personally do not want either to romanticise or condemn Torres for a decision that he made in conscience. I would say, along with Dom Helder Camara, that

In my opinion the memory of Camilo Torres and the Guevara merits as much respect as that of Martin Luther King. I accuse the real authors of violence who, whether on the right or left, weaken justice and prevent peace.⁴⁶

In my own country of India I would not opt for violent revolution. I see possibilities for evolutionary reform. Some important structural changes have already taken place. If, however, the situation were ever to become hopeless, as in Colombia, I would want to leave my options open. I do not rule out either violence or non-violence on principle. I would choose the one that seemed to be the most strategic and productive way to go, and that which would be the most loving thing to do in the situation. A weighing of consequences would seem to be an important element in any such decision.

⁴⁵Petras, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

⁴⁶Dom Helder Camara, *The Church and Colonialism: The Betrayal of the Third World* (Danville, N.J.: Dimension, 1969), p. 109.

CHAPTER III

COLIN MORRIS

Colin Morris is an Englishman. He served as a missionary in Zambia, Northern Rhodesia at the time of his arrival there in 1956. Known as a politically minded minister, he took part in Zambia's struggle for freedom in the course of which he suffered bitter unpopularity, imprisonment and violence to his person. He is a friend of Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda and now spends half his time, at the President's request, working with him on a number of development projects. The other half sees him serving as minister of Wesley's Chapel in London.¹

One day in 1968, while Morris was still living full time in Zambia, a Zambian dropped dead only a few feet from Morris' front door. The pathologist's autopsy report gave malnutrition as the cause of death. The man's shrunken stomach reportedly contained nothing more than a few leaves and what appeared to be a ball of grass. The very same day Morris received his Methodist Recorder, its pages filled with the latest report of the fiery debates surrounding the Anglican-Methodist Union negotiations, news which he had avidly pursued until that day. The day's happenings made him view the scene with new eyes and he says,

¹From biographical note included at the end of Colin Morris, *Unyoung-Uncoloured-Unpoor* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), p. 158.

It took an ugly little man with a shrunken belly, whose total possessions, according to the police, were a pair of shorts, a ragged shirt and an empty Biro pen, to show me that this whole Union affair is the great Non-Event of British Church history. . . .

Nor is the world perishing for lack of stronger, better organized churches. It is perishing for lack of bread.²

With this as his opening salvo Morris began to lay out his theology of liberation or what also might be called his liberation of theology. What he was saying basically, taking as an example the theological arguments and uproar over some trivial matters involved in the Anglican-Methodist Union negotiations, was that Christian theology has often been done in such a way that it has lost sight of the real issues that face the Christian in the world today. It has either been unable or unwilling to see the world realistically. He therefore called for theologians to distinguish between genuine and spurious concerns, to search out the real issues.³ The following of spurious concerns, characteristic of large sections of theology, was seen by Morris as part of "a highly elaborate conspiracy against that little man with the shrunken belly and his skeletal brethren."⁴ The crux of his charge of theological conspiracy against the little man is that

It consists in taking unintelligible sentences and paradoxical statements whose subject is Jesus and whose subject is the world, and proving that they answer his anguished cry for bread. At least, they prove the case to our satisfaction. Not to his. He can't eat our words. He dies of hunger.⁵

Having made this charge that theology is guilty of conspiracy

²Colin Morris, *Include Me Out* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), pp. 7f.

³*Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 17.

by virtue of its interest in spurious concerns, Morris went on to say that another part of this conspiracy revolves around theology's non-action, its non-urgency, its deadness. This is most clearly seen in the theological treatment of various prophets such as Bonhoeffer. These prophets' writings are usually analysed rather than acted upon and the analysis often only serves to kill their message. And so Morris observes that in our theological treatment of such prophets

We deal with them the way the oyster deals with an irritating grain of sand in its innards--cover them with pearl and consign them to the Theological Hall of Fame. . . . we do not do what they say. Here, surely, lies the difference between live and dead theology.⁶

Thus for Morris, theology is what we are when we stop talking and start acting.

Morris would not accept the charge that such a stand was anti-intellectual, a down grading of theological research, a discouraging of thinking. He would say instead that

The judgment upon us is not that we have failed to bring our theology into line with the best modern thought, though that may be true, but that we do not act to the limit of the theology we already have.⁷

The Christian is one who acts in compassion to feed the little men of the world. He is one who involves himself in action in and for Jesus' name, with cost to himself. What has eternal significance is not our ecclesiastical structures, our church buildings or our vestments but our acts of compassion. These for Morris are the effectual

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 31.

signs of the presence of the Kingdom.⁸

The judge of our faithfulness to the Gospel is the little man with the shrunken belly. Morris reinterprets salvation for this little man most powerfully when he says that Jesus' salvation comes in the form of food rather than death on the cross in his behalf. The little man has seen too many of his people, young and old, die more lingering, painful deaths than crucifixion to be impressed by it. Only Westerners in their sterile, well-fed and painless existence are impressed by the violence of the crucifixion. Bread for the little man is the equivalent of resurrection for with it he is snatched from death's jaws.⁹ Morris then asks us a sobering question about salvation. He wonders what would happen if the saved and lost were divided not on the basis of elaborate theological schemes of salvation but on the basis of asking the little man who did him good.¹⁰

Morris makes a statement of caution here that I find very meaningful. He cautions that, while the church has been cowardly and has hopelessly compromised itself, we ought to be cautious of being sanctimonious, self-righteous and pious by taking a stand, in Jesus' name, against the church. We cannot be obedient to the command to feed the hungry and ignore the famished state of the church. We not only have to remember that we have a measure of responsibility for the church's failures, but we also must remember that it was through the church, warped and distorted though it may have been, that we first glimpsed

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 56.

the one with whom we now want to stand in the life of the world. He sees that our condemnation of the church's failures betray "our loyalty to a church that could exist and does exist somewhere," they betray our need of the church.¹¹ Thus Morris does not leave the church but seeks for "a New Reformation."¹²

World poverty is a phenomenon to which theology has not addressed itself, according to Morris. We see a situation in which the White Christian and Western minority is rich, and growing richer. This minority, 20 per cent of the world's population, consumes 75 per cent of the world's wealth. The rest of humanity lives in the squalor of poverty.¹³ The world thus is divided between gluttons and paupers. The church, says Morris, is an institution of gluttons and is thus unable to speak to the paupers of the world who, unlike the well-fed who can afford to play at church, are busy in the garbage heaps searching for scraps of food to keep themselves and their offspring alive. He then makes the telling observation that most theology today is done by well-fed men who do not really know hunger, who take it for granted that their audience is also so privileged.¹⁴

Thus, the ever growing worldwide revolution of the have-nots against the haves finds the church, and its theology, on the wrong side of the barricades, i.e. on the same side as the gluttonous rich who also happen to be the Christians. These rich Christians gather

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 46f.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 51.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 58f.

to resist the revolution. This happens while at the same time Jesus is on the other side of the barricade, opposed to what claims to be his church, seeking to change the social order.¹⁵

The church is too rich for its own good. It is dying because it is a hoarder, preparing for the future ages rather than using its substance to face the present. It is wealth--wealth, in the context of this hungry world, being for Morris resources that are surplus to immediate needs. He adds that giving away the surplus wealth would be only a stop gap measure touching the edges of the poverty problem. It would not change the fact that the church will still die on the wrong side of the barricades, but it would, at least, be a death accompanied with clean hands and consciences.¹⁶

What does the church exist for? Morris answers his own question by saying that the church "exists to report an Event by *re-enacting it*."¹⁷ The church has not been faithful to this purpose of re-enacting the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. She refuses to die and thus makes the preaching of resurrection meaningless. In her survival-oriented style of life; i.e. building up more wealth than she needs for everyday purposes, through savings, investments and reserves, the church displays a lack of confidence in God's calling her forth again when spent.¹⁸ But the church is dying anyway. It is eroding towards an unaccomplished death not related to the service of

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 62ff.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 66ff.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 70.

the little, hungry men of the world. Morris feels that an accomplished death, a death caused by the abandoning of her prudence and the unleashing of her resources in large scale acts of compassion, compassion being something she constantly claims to be existing for, "would at least ensure that there was a Body left for God, if He so willed, to transfigure."¹⁹

And so Morris in his encounter with this little man felt himself liberated from worrying about the church's survival. He felt freed, instead, to work for the survival which matters, the survival of the little man, for his liberation from subhuman conditions. In this new frame of mind Morris sees theological renewal as action towards the feeding of the hungry little men of the world and not the upgrading, rewriting or streamlining of theology so as to ensure the church's survival.²⁰

Being Christian in our day and age, for Morris, is to act for political, economic and social change, for the basic and meaningful change of those structures that dehumanise men. Christian action is not the giving of mere charity in Jesus' name, to alleviate or salve the suffering caused by dehumanising structures. It is the removal of such structures so that such suffering does not arise in the first place.²¹

Theology is related to this task and commitment. It is not for theology to say which way Christians should go in their action.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 88.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 97.

It is not for theology to plan and map out the way. Neither is it theology's role to initiate such action. It is theology's role, instead, to reflect critically on the actions of Christians. Theology begins at that point where Christians try to follow Jesus in meeting the needs of human beings through compassionate action. Without compassionate action at its root, theology is dead. Theology will only come to life again, says Morris, when it struggles with the survival of starving men rather than with the survival of the church.²²

Having defined the role of theology as doing critical reflection on the actions of Christians, Morris in his book, *Unyoung--Uncoloured--Unpoor* makes just such an attempt. In this book he reflects on the actions of Christians, specifically Black Rhodesian Christians, in their efforts for liberation of the African majority population from the white supremacist and incidentally, illegal, regime now controlling Rhodesia. The basic question that he deals with here is that asked of him by a young Rhodesian nationalist, who also considers himself a Christian. This man wants to take up arms for the liberation struggle as he sees it to be the only effective method for obtaining liberation that is open. Yet he is troubled at the same time by the question, "Can a Christian take up guns and sticks against his fellowman?"²³ Morris' answer to this question comes out of the context of the Rhodesian situation yet it is also

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 98f.

²³From a letter by M. N. Daniel to Colin Morris, quoted in *Unyoung--Uncoloured--Unpoor*, p. 10.

useful while surveying the liberation struggles taking place in most of the Third World. It comes out of the context of his experience of reflecting on the ethics of violence, not as a theoretician but as a pastor of living in Zambia which has become the haven of Christian guerillas who fight in Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia.²⁴

The answer is *yes*. Morris believes that Christians in Rhodesia are justified in using violence, short of sadism for its own sake, to gain their liberation. He claims to know of no other way that they could follow to gain their liberation, given the present situation.²⁵ This situation sees the Smith regime too powerfully entrenched for power to be pried away by peaceful means. Neither Britain nor the United States find it to their advantage, in spite of the ideals of freedom and democracy which they profess to follow, to exert meaningful pressure for change. The United Nations does not possess effective power either and other African states would easily be defeated, militarily by superior Rhodesian forces if they attempted to liberate Rhodesia. In short, Black Rhodesians, for all practical purposes, are on their own in the liberation struggle.²⁶

The problem of facing evil, and destroying it, is something Christians find very hard to face, says Morris. We make better and more willing martyrs, in the face of evil, than destroyers of it. We are very hesitant in cutting down evil and usually only move to do so when it reaches enormous extremes. At the root of this tendency

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 21ff.

to procrastinate and move too late is the problem that Christians are usually taught to think religiously rather than politically. Morris believes that Christian concern with evil should enable Christians to recognise evil wherever and whenever it appears in this world we live in. He adds that church teaching, as for example in sermons, does not usually school Christians to recognise such evil as easily as they should because the terms used to describe evil are usually religious terms rather than political or social ones. Christians seem to be capable, therefore, of recognising evil in the world only when it closely approximates "the biblical cartoon of Satan." Hence they are usually far behind politically trained thinkers when it comes to acting against evil or even identifying it in the first place.²⁷

Similarly, Christians do not have a very realistic understanding of revolution. Western Christians especially are used to gaining change through "nice" methods. Non-violent, passive resistance is the usual tactic of militant Christians. In a revolutionary situation, however, it is a fallacy to see non-violence, or "ahimsa" as we Indians call it, as a good alternative to storming the barricades because it is a flawed judgment which assumes "that it is possible to foment revolutions in which we are the only ones who get hurt."²⁸

Citing the need of knowing one's enemy as being one of the first rules of war, Morris takes a brief first look at the "Up-People" of whom White Rhodesians are just a small segment. The Up-People are

²⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 25f.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 30.

the rulers of the world. They are the Unyoung, the Uncoloured and the Unpoor. These are also the people who stand in the way of a liberated future for the dispossessed of the Third World. This group is white, well-fed, and well experienced in the art of protecting its interests. Since it also controls and makes the rules, meaningful change through the system is impossible. Its value system holds property as more sacred than human life. Morris adds that this description is somewhat inexact because there are many exceptions to the rule on both sides. All coloureds are not poor as all whites are not rich. All the young are not rebels as all the unyoung are not reactionary. But by and large the picture holds true.²⁹

Morris now takes a closer look at each of the constituent sub-groups that make up the Up-People. These are the Unyoung, the Uncoloured and the Unpoor. This closer look does not bear directly on his theology of liberation, so I will not go into it, but it does serve to paint a portrait of what those who are working for liberation are up against. The portrait that emerges of the Up-People is basically that of a group which blocks meaningful change, that frustrates justice and hence peace. Laws are made in such a way as to bolster their position, to make it more entrenched. One of the major rules enforced by the Up-People is that change has to be non-violent. Non-violence is their sacred cow. Yet they practise a violence, i.e. systemic violence, which is far greater than the overt violence of

²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 31ff.

revolutionaries, and which in fact precedes it. Their systemic violence is clothed in the majesty of law.³⁰

Morris makes a strong case against non-violence as the only acceptable way to bring about social change. Gandhi, the most successful user of this method, has to be understood in the context where he was successful. He was not only or purely a political leader but was also a religious saint in a country where spiritual values are very important. Thus he was able to command a loyalty no political leader could. Furthermore, he was not faced by a ruthless dictator who would think nothing of killing him, but a somewhat kindly despot in British rule. Each time he was sentenced to jail, in fact, his judges prefaced their sentence with speeches of regret.³¹ Furthermore, says Morris, and I would support him in this assertion, Gandhi's movement was made even more significant by the fact of the background of widespread violence in India. "Like a diamond, it needs black velvet to set it off."³²

In similar fashion Martin Luther King was to become more effective, than he otherwise might have been, because of Stokely Carmichael and Malcolm X and their less passive approaches. While saying this Morris protests that he is not trying to deny non-violent resistance a place in the scheme of things, nor denying that it has made enormous contributions when used by such men as Gandhi and King. He

³⁰*Ibid.* Read Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 86.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 88.

wants to show, however, that proponents of non-violent resistance would have been politically impotent without the violence already present in their situations. Either method used at the wrong time and in the wrong way could defeat its own purposes. What Morris is trying to say, therefore, is that he sees violence not as a moral choice but as a tactical one. "Tactics dictate the weapon."³³

Violence is the most effective, available method to the dispossessed. They are not as enamoured with passive resistance because they are so very used to suffering without retaliation in their everyday life. They have next to nothing to lose in a struggle to the death in comparison to the "haves" who have much to lose. Thus, says Morris, a Viet Cong guerilla's death is not equal to that of an American G.I., because it is a bowl of rice and rags balanced against a house, car, job and long life expectancy.³⁴

Morris makes an important point when he goes on to say that it is delusional thinking even to try to make moral distinctions between violence and non-violence. Gandhi's boycott of British cloth, a non-violent tactic, saw Lancashire children go hungry as a consequence. Gandhi never personally hurt anyone physically but his movement and tactics was the occasion of others sinning as they met him with force. The practical choice, therefore, is not between pure violence and pure non-violence, but between lesser and greater forms of violence.³⁵

What would Jesus do in a situation like this in Rhodesia?

³³*Ibid.*, pp. 90f.

³⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 92f.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 95.

Morris makes a strong case against Jesus' being a pacifist. He acknowledges that theologians, he included, to suit their purposes can read anything they wish either into or out of Jesus, and thus give an "untrue" picture of him. He is willing, however, to take this risk to make a case for Jesus being a revolutionary, a zealot, a possible side of Jesus normally played down by the majority of Christian scholars. He points, for example, to the fact that almost the only hard, reliable fact we have about Jesus is that he was executed by the Romans as a revolutionary against Roman rule. The method of execution was crucifixion, a method used, both before and after Jesus, to execute hundreds of zealot freedom-fighters. Yet the Gospels toned this down and even placed the responsibility squarely on the Jewish leaders, rather than the Romans. Why? The answer lies, theorises Morris, in the fact that the Gospels had to be designed to meet the needs of evangelising the Romans to Christianity. Thus it would not be wise to paint the Romans as the villains in Jesus' crucifixion. So the Romans' role in His crucifixion was played down and He was portrayed as a spiritual leader, insulated from the political realities of His day.³⁶

Having made this case for Jesus' participation in Israel's freedom struggle, and his being killed for it, Morris again goes on record supporting violent revolution for those who have no other way to go. By this he is not implying that there are no other alternatives

³⁶*Ibid.*, Chapter 6. Also see S. G. F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), for a fuller treatment of this view.

to violence but rather that the other alternatives have not been effective in obtaining change and the alleviation of the violence of the unjust structures. He seems to be saying that commitment to the end of achieving liberation entails a commitment to the means that are necessary to successfully achieve it. He says therefore that

Mercy may *require* revolution--the use of violence to destroy a system of greater violence which prevents millions from being free men before God.³⁷

Morris takes the opportunity to fire a salvo at the church's traditional abhorrence of revolution. To him this is an inconsistent position, for the church has existed in the midst of "the most elaborate system of violence the world has known--Western society," and it has existed in comfort. Yet this same church condemns the dispossessed when in desperation they try to hit back at the violence that is destroying them. He adds, with a touch of irony, that the church's Jesus has become the most effective weapon for peace after the U. S. Air Force.³⁸

So violent revolution is seen as a legitimate method to use for liberation. It is an extreme and difficult road, warns Morris who is anxious not to romanticise revolution, but he who fights for man's right to be human has a strong claim to God's mercy.³⁹

Let us now make a brief recapitulation of the main themes contained in Morris' theology of liberation. Firstly Morris attempts a liberation of theology. He calls on theology to shift from studying

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 156f.

and debating trivia *ad nauseum* and from directing itself to ensuring the survival of the church's institutional structure. Instead he wants it directed toward searching for real issues, issues which are connected with action for the survival of the dispossessed of the world and their liberation from dehumanising conditions. He cautions, however, that theology ought not to take over the liberation struggle by charting its course or initiating its action. Rather it should reflect on the actions of Christians as they strive towards the liberation of human beings. Implied throughout is that this liberation is directed to the whole man.

Secondly Morris is concerned with the fact that Christians comprise the rich gluttons of the world. They are on the other side of the barricades from the dispossessed. The church is an integral part of the status quo and comfortably so. In fact it often even defends this status quo and discourages change. Morris calls for the church to change and become obedient to its purpose, i.e. to be prophetic in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets and Jesus who fought for the breakdown of dehumanising structures. The church has to stop compromising itself and the Gospel it preaches.

Finally, Morris reflects theologically on violent revolution as a tactic for liberation. He breaks from the traditional church stand and claims revolution to be a legitimate tactic to use in appropriate situations. In support of his position he makes a case for Jesus' being a revolutionary. He adds that those who fight for man's right to be human have a strong claim to mercy.

In evaluating Morris I find him very much in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets. In fact, he is trying to emulate their style. Thus he is strongly polemical like the prophets. He is consciously provocative and speaks in righteous anger of the failures of the people of God. As a result there is a high degree of subjectivity and somewhat of a lack of balance. If accused of this, he would not deny it, but would even claim it to be necessary. Balance is a luxury not to be afforded.

I would tend to agree with him on this. Being objectively balanced too often tends to dilute a point of view and this is unfortunate especially if it is a view whose presentation is long overdue. Objectivity, in something like this polemic of Morris', only dulls; it does not sharpen. It prevents that narrowing, intensifying and magnifying of perception so necessary for a hard-hitting case presentation. Here I do not criticise Morris' one-sidedness. I am sure that the prophets would not either. I am not trying to downgrade the value or necessity of objectivity. All I am saying is that in certain situations, such as polemical presentations, objectivity is not helpful.

I find Morris' literary style to be delightful. It is simple, clear and liberally spiced with wit. If criticised for being popular in style, he would probably feel complimented. He takes to heart his own criticism of most theology, i.e. that it is incomprehensible by the average Christian. He writes in language that no one could fail to understand. He communicates. In doing so he does not compromise his scholarly grasp of, and approach to, his material.

I consider most of what he has to say as dealing with the real issues that have to be confronted in the Third World struggle for liberation, and in the theological reflection of it. I feel what he has to say to be generally correct. The church's theology by and large has not faced the real issues and it is time that it is liberated to do so. Also, with regard to his picture of the powerful, White Western Christians who effectively control most of this world, I would say his picture is accurate. It is the picture that most of the Third World holds to be true.

One possibly weak and incorrect part of Morris' theology is his painting of Jesus as a revolutionary. I say "possibly weak and incorrect" only. He may, or may not, be right. The major portion of biblical scholarship to date would say that Morris is not right in his picturing of Jesus as a revolutionary. I am rather sure, however, that his picture of Jesus is no less correct than the traditional church portrait of Jesus as a purely spiritual leader, totally insulated from the political issues of His time. After all, the only thing we know for certain, both from Christian and non-Christian sources, is that Jesus was executed by the Romans for the political crime of being a revolutionary. Thus I see Morris' view to have some degree of truth at least. It is a valuable corrective of the traditional church view. Whether we agree with him or not, Morris challenges us to face the possibility of Jesus having this side to Him.

In evaluating Camilo Torres' view of revolution I made some preliminary remarks on my own view of revolution. I say preliminary

because I wanted first to present Morris' view of revolution and then to make my own fuller observations on both of them taken together. Now I will make that fuller statement.

I already have said that one must understand the context in which revolution is put forward as a tactic for action. Rhodesia like Colombia offers little hope for meaningful change through peaceful means. The latest happenings in Rhodesia with regard to the agreement made between the British government and the illegal Smith regime concerning Rhodesian independence only serve to confirm that Black Rhodesians are being given a raw deal with no apparent hope for redress or change. The majority of Black Rhodesians have rejected the proposed terms of the settlement, terms which they see as only perpetuating their colonised status, denying them majority rule power.⁴⁰ Thus violent revolution does seem to provide a legitimate and more effective way of achieving liberation. It is the court of last resort.

I have already said that I do not see the question of violence for liberation as a moral question, but rather as a tactical question. However, in making this statement I would not want to be misunderstood as saying that the question of violence is a morally neutral one. It is not for I feel violence for its own sake to be immoral. I am rather attempting to say that in a condition of already prevailing violence, such as the structural violence of injustice and subhuman conditions, counter violence to remove that structural violence can be seen as

⁴⁰For example read "Rhodesia: The Blacks Say No," *Newsweek* (January 31, 1972), 25f.

permissible if all the other possible means to remove it have failed. Hence the question of revolutionary counter violence is not one of morality but one of tactics. I think that Morris and Torres would agree with me on this.

And yet though I say that this is not a moral question, I am troubled by the question of whether violent revolution is a loving or unloving action. I have tried to come up with a tentative answer.

Violence for its own sake is bad. It is unloving for it hurts and damages human beings. I hate physical violence if for no other reason than my abhorrence of pain, pain which I excruciatingly experienced the one and only time I sparred in a boxing ring; which I reexperienced when I broke my arm; which I reexperienced when I was almost blinded in a chemistry laboratory explosion; pain which I will avoid like the plague whenever I possibly can.

But as I grew older, I discovered that the physical pain I felt in various disasters and fights was nothing compared with the pain caused by a vitriolic tongue cutting me down, or rejection by other people, or the pain of knowing and seeing others living in filth and degradation. That physical pain was preferable. It was preferable to the sight I had one day of an emaciated fellow human being searching the public rubbish heap, finding and then eating, or more properly, wolfing down with apparent relish the moldy, rotten green rind of a melon. And I wonder, if I felt ill just looking on, what that man, and millions like him, feel living in degraded conditions. In that incident, then, I had discovered structural violence. I did

not know the term then, but even then its effects were very apparent to me.

When I consider violence, therefore, I must stay very aware of structural violence. Invariably, revolutionary violence does not rise in a situation of peace. Structural violence is already present, embedded in the unjust social, political, economic and even religious institutions of society. Law and order to preserve such structures is violence too. Hence revolution against these structures is not the initiation of violence. It is reaction to it. Ruben Alves for one would agree, saying that

. . . revolution far from being invading virus are but symptoms of functional perturbation, symptoms which will only be solved by the disintegration of the structure which introduces them, and by the birth of another.⁴¹

Violence seen in this light cannot, therefore, be simply dismissed as unloving action. Violence against the violence of existence in subhuman conditions has to be seen as a humanising tendency rather than an evil one. Violence for liberation, for removal of dehumanising structures, so that more humanising ones may be established, cannot be excluded from Christian action as unloving. I very strongly believe that violence for liberation is not the opposite of love, it is not hate. It can even be resorted to because of love. I would, therefore, see violence as legitimate when all other channels have been exhausted, when no other possibility remains. Peaceful means would be my first

⁴¹Ruben Alves, "God's People and Man's Liberation," *Isa7 Abstracts*, III:26, p. 8.

resort for the seeking of liberation. Violence would be my last resort, if all other methods failed.

CHAPTER IV

GENEVA 1966 AND BEIRUT 1968

Up to this point we have seen, in the writings of Torres and Morris, a great deal of concentration on liberation as revolution. There is a problem, however, if the two are seen as necessarily synonymous. Revolution does not necessarily lead to liberation. Revolution may make liberation a potential consequence but does not ensure it.

The present case of Bangladesh is illustrative of this. Through revolution Bangladesh is now free of Pakistan's domination and exploitation. The people of Bangladesh now enjoy freedom and sovereignty but not liberation--by liberation I mean the freedom of men to develop their God-given potentiality in all its dimensions, spiritual, material, historical, social and individual. Liberation is a potential situation and the leaders and people of Bangladesh now face the uphill task of attaining this liberation, of sweeping away the subhuman conditions so prevalent in their beautiful land. Real liberation will depend on the success of their efforts.

We can see what I am talking about when we examine the writings of Morris and Torres. Morris talks of revolution to attain independence for Rhodesia's African majority. Next door in Zambia, however, he shows how independence has not proved to be equal to the liberation of Zambia's people, the majority of whom still live in dehumanised, unliberated conditions. Independence has not removed hunger or death due

to malnutrition. Similarly the Colombia of Torres is an independent nation of many years standing, independence from Spain having been achieved many years ago. The majority of Colombia's people, however, are still not liberated but live in dehumanised conditions, subject to the exploitation of both external and internal colonialism.

In other words, in most of the Third World nations, political independence is not equivalent to the liberation of the peoples of those nations. It is only the first step towards that goal. Torres and Morris did address themselves briefly to this fact but not to the same extent as does our third set of writings, i.e. the report of the World Conference on Church and Society, Geneva 1966, and the report of the Conference on Society, Development and Peace (SODEPAX), Beirut 1968. In these two Conference reports we have some systematic thinking on the achieving of liberation in post-independent Third World nations.

The conference met in Geneva to discuss the theme "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time" with a view to "advising the churches and the WCC on their ministry in a world undergoing revolutionary social change."¹ It is important to note this fact, i.e., that the conference was not for the purpose of speaking on behalf of the member churches of the WCC but for the purpose of speaking to them and advising them on Christian response to the revolutions of our day and age.² This report, which comes out of the Geneva

¹World Conference on Church and Society, *Official Report* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1967), p. 6.

²*Ibid.*, p. 9.

conference, reflects this purpose and covers a wide ranging number of themes. We will now consider some of the more important of these themes as they relate to liberation in the Third World.

To my mind, the most important message coming out of the conference is its advocacy of the need for accelerated development in the nations of the Third World and for changes in the relationships obtaining between these nations and the rich industrialised nations.³ Economic growth is seen as being basically good, something to be welcomed, because it can lead to greater freedom from drudgery, from unnecessary want and economic insecurity and it can provide greater opportunities for men to use their skills in other ways than for drudgery. Balance, however, is necessary. Economic growth is not to be accepted uncritically. Economic growth and consumption as ends in themselves are bad. The fruits of work are for man's well being. Man here is seen as the whole man. Thus the conference sees economic growth as it works for the well being of the whole man, as good.⁴

The conference refused to take a position in support of any particular economic system and in fact held it to be incorrect for Christians to argue in favour of a particular economic system as being the most Christian or the Christian one. An economic system, as is economic growth, is the means and not the end. It is the means for achieving the ends for which man is made. Christians are called to be critical participants of their particular societies, of their economic

³*Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp.53f.

systems, to challenge them as to the way they meet human needs.

Effective response to human need is the key.⁵

It was also recognised by the conference that in order to more effectively and more justly meet human need, economic development is necessary. It also recognised that economic development involves change with the aim of bringing about better living conditions through increased productivity. Change is necessary and the form it takes will depend upon the particular country, on its motivations, resources and institutions. Hence one cannot make a "universal prescription for economic development" but must weigh the peculiar circumstances and needs of the nation involved instead.⁶

And so the conference supported social change as a way to facilitate justice. It saw the impulse for such change to be the working of the Spirit of God rather than a human product. The Bible, for example, records many changes in human life brought about by men's response to God's call. The working for justice and for changes necessary to facilitate justice is something to which the Spirit of God calls us, and the conference called for us Christians to heed this call in faithfulness and obedience. Working for justice is one way of gaining the well being of our brother, and since God has laid the duty of caring for our brother on us, the heeding of the call to faithfulness and obedience was seen as crucial.⁷

While holding that the need for change in the poor nations is

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 55f.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 67.

important if development is to be accelerated, the conference also saw the need for a change in the relationships obtaining between the rich and poor nations. It recognised that

. . . internal institutional reforms cannot be effective unless changes are made in the international policies and institutions which affect the economies of developing nations. Among these are the economic and trade policies of the more developed nations . . . the many national and international agreements for the establishment or stabilisation of prices for commodities and raw materials, for fixing production and export quotas, and the like.⁸

These world economic and trade institutions were established in colonial times for the benefit of the colonial powers. They were established on the basis of a division between the colonies which were mainly poor agricultural countries and the rich industrialised countries of greater Europe, the former being used as the source of raw materials and as captive markets for the manufactures of the latter. There was thus great economic inequality in colonial times where economic institutions were established for the purpose of draining the resources of the colonies for the benefit of their colonial masters. Because these institutions have remained almost unchanged, since the independence of the colonies, the great inequality has continued. In fact the gap between rich and poor nations is growing wider. The poor nations are very new in the field of applied science and technology and hence do not command the means to promote as high productivity as the rich nations do. They do not have a highly diversified production and depend on a few products and on limited markets. Because of their

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 77.

poverty and lack of power in relation to the rich nations they are too often dominated by the latter who have major control over the pricing of their products. The result is an unfavourable balance of trade payments. The poor nations need to purchase more goods from the developed nations than they sell them in return. This "trade gap" becomes, for many nations, a great bottleneck of development because they do not earn the foreign exchange necessary to purchase goods and services that are needed for development from the developed nations.⁹

Trade is a major source of foreign exchange earnings but most Third World nations are not able to earn through trade what they need. Foreign investment and aid are the major alternative ways to gain necessary foreign exchange. Their record, however, has also not been good. One problem of foreign investment is that the foreign businessman's profit motive conflicts with the goal of development which is to increase productivity and to distribute it equitably. Instead of taking a long-range view of the market and reinvesting profits, training domestic persons in necessary skills, and cooperating with the host nation in its drive towards development, foreign businessmen are too often interested in high, short-term gains. As a result there are cases where "capital outflow exceeds capital inflow, an anomaly for a capital poor country."¹⁰

Aid too often does not benefit the recipient nations to the greatest extent possible for a number of reasons beyond internal misuse

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 80f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

or mismanagement of it. It is rarely given in consultation with the recipient nations and often does not meet real needs. It is usually short-term in commitment rather than long-term. It is generally bilateral in nature and is often used as an instrument of foreign policy, to control and manipulate the recipient nation. Multilateral aid channeled through international organisations is rare. In short, the usual method of aid transfer is unsatisfactory for the recipient nations.¹¹

Having recognised and considered these problems, the conference made some specific recommendations which are aimed at changing some of the relationships between rich and poor nations in order to facilitate development in the Third World. With regard to aid it was recommended that there be a vast increase in the quantity of development assistance to developing nations, reaching an amount equivalent to between one and two per cent of the aggregate G.N.P. of the developed nations. It also urged that such assistance be in the form of grants rather than loans, that it be multilateral aid rather than bilateral aid with strings, and that it be the kind of aid reflecting the real needs of developing nations. As far as trade was concerned, the elimination of negative balances of trade and of adverse price fluctuation effects through international agreements on prices, quotas and compensatory payments was seen as necessary. Developed nations need to make their markets more open to the goods of developing nations

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

and to remove such tariffs as hinder certain exports especially processed goods. The formation of regional trade groups by developing nations was strongly supported. For long run considerations, the study of the possibilities of an international division of labour, where all nations would make specific contributions to the world market and trade with each other as equals, was put forward.¹²

The conference involved itself with this question of economic development because it saw the churches having a role in it, both in the developing nations and in the developed ones. There are many forms that church action could take. The church can, for example, minister to those of its members who are involved in decision-making that affects economic affairs and help them "to relate their activities more closely to their Christian obedience, so that their decisions can reflect the care of Christ for the whole world."¹³ In relation to the giving and receiving of aid the church has to combat paternalism, superiority, pride and impatience and to emphasise the ethic of stewardship for the world, on the one hand, and to discourage recipients from being servile, resentful and inferior, and in short to combat anything inconsistent with human dignity. It can sponsor and pursue the study of development problems and possible solutions of those problems, because it needs to understand better the issues if it is intelligently and constructively to help its members to face the issues. The church can also encourage members with special skills

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 84ff.

useful for development to serve in developing nations and, more importantly, train replacements. The church can coordinate such activity with the appropriate governmental and business agencies. Finally, the conference stressed the educational role of the church as its most important one. This education can take the forms of theological, economic, political and social education all with the aim of educating public opinion to the problems of development and possible solutions and to formulation of courses of action.¹⁴

Why should the church be involved at all in economic development? We have earlier seen that one reason given by the conference was its belief that God has laid the duty of caring for our brother on us and that when we strive for development, we strive to make our caring more effective. Another reason stems from the doctrine of creation which emphasises the universality of God's love. It sees that

God has created and redeemed the whole world. This implies a more just distribution not only of wealth but also of health, education, security, housing and opportunity. . . . The protection or advancement of sectional interests, whether of particular nations, classes, industries or individuals, at the expense of the good of humanity is repugnant to God and inconsistent with his love for the whole of creation.¹⁵

The conference, then, held to a doctrine of universal brotherhood and saw the necessity of having a better distribution of human production to be nothing else but good stewardship.¹⁶

Finally, the conference saw the church to have a role in development, in spite of its technical nature, because it believed the

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp 87f.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 91.

technical to be neither amoral nor non-ethical. It held that God is concerned with the technical also, with such things as balance of payments, tariffs, institutions, etc. To insist otherwise would be to make artificial divisions between God and the World He died to save.¹⁷

In addition to development which, in my opinion, was the most important single theme, related to Third World liberation, that the conference dealt with, the conference also examined the role of the state in this revolutionary age. The first thing that the conference examined in this section was the question of power. Power is essential to all persons and societies because it gives to men the capacity to do. Human power is delegated to men by God. The Christian concern, then, must be "that all human power be used to benefit man rather than abuse or betray him."¹⁸ This is the reason that God has given power to man. Power in a society is usually mainly vested in the state but the state should not exercise all power in that society or expect ultimate allegiance for such allegiance is to be given to God alone.¹⁹

Having established and emphasised this, the conference held that it was important for the state, as the peoples' representative, to have control over other power centres in its society. This is necessary to enable the state to see that justice for all the people is done. Special interests should not exist at the expense of the well being of the whole society. Not only should state activity be directed towards obtaining the well being of the people but the people

¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 89f.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 97.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 98.

should also have a role in deciding the direction of such activity. True participation of all the people is the best way to guard against the rule of bureaucracy and the establishment of privileged groups.²⁰

The conference was concerned with the question of law and held that Christians need to be involved in all aspects of law with the intent to see that it be just, of service to all the people of a given society and respectful of their God-given dignity. It saw law to have moral and theological foundations and held that the

. . . Christian's responsibility includes not only critical respect for and response to existing law but also participation in the formation of law. The making of law, the keeping of law, and the improvement of law are three aspects of a total obligation of citizenship.²¹

The state in developing nations was seen to have a role not only in the promoting of economic development but also of character-formation and development. Nationalism and national unity are valuable elements to be developed--the nationalism referred to here is not the aggressive variety which deifies the nation, exhibits feelings of national superiority and leads to war, but rather the positive variety which embodies the concept of national purpose which is so essential for nation building. The conference held it be also necessary for the state in developing nations to have goals including:

development of national purpose,
greatest possible development of human and natural resources,
creation of broadly based social organisation,
creation of broadly based social justice,
security for the people and the state,

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 99f.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

the desacralisation of the impact of technology, adequate education and cultural opportunity for all people, participation of the people at all levels in the decision-making processes.²²

Christians should prompt and encourage their states to work for human welfare. We are called on to undertake a ministry of reconciliation but not at the cost of justice. This is because the major essential of Christian ministry is to care for the weak and oppressed. It is thus our duty to work wherever possible to promote social justice.²³

International Peace and Security was another subject of concern studied by the conference. Great attention was devoted to nuclear warfare. I will not examine this discussion because I believe that nuclear war is fading as an issue in the Third World. In fact, I believe it never to have been a part of the reality of the majority of the peoples of the Third World. I also believe that the minority, which has at times worried about the possibilities of universal conflagration through nuclear war, is becoming more concerned with the more real and immediate danger which lies in the failure to deal with the problems of injustice, dehumanisation, marginalisation, starvation and poverty of the majority of the Third World's peoples.

All of this is not to say that there is no concern for war and peace in the Third World. On the contrary, as we have already seen, there is such concern because, among other reasons, of the fact that fifty-three of the fifty-five wars fought in the twenty-four years

²²*Ibid.*, pp 106f.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 118.

between the end of World War II and 1969 have been fought in the Third World.²⁴ I share this concern and will briefly examine those sections of the report that bear on War and Peace in the Third World.

The conference recognised that war is the symptom of deep-seated problems. It usually results from the unjust political and economic conditions prevalent in international society. One such form of injustice, both on the international and national levels, is discrimination based on differences between people such as race, religion, and/or culture. Practise of such discrimination is not always based purely on these differences but also on self-interest and the desire to preserve special privileges. The conference pointed to the situations of injustice in Rhodesia, South Africa and South West Africa as possible sparks of racial war.²⁵

Life in subhuman conditions is injustice especially when the possibility of achieving freedom from such conditions exists as never before. People live in hunger, poverty and misery while rich nations behave in such a way as will only perpetuate the situation. God gave sovereignty over the earth to all people, not just a few, but the international structures do not reflect this. They serve only to make the privileged nations more so. As long as true economic development, affecting all the peoples of the world, does not take place, the

²⁴George Thayer, *The War Business* (New York: Discus Avon, 1969), p. 36.

²⁵World Conference, *op. cit.*, pp. 135f.

possibility of war will continue to exist.²⁶

The use of Third World nations in the ideological conflicts of bold war politics is unjust. This has already resulted in many wars--the most notable being Korea and Viet Nam. Tense situations have been made worse by the supply of armaments by the big powers who want to score foreign policy points. At times they have been even more active and there has been direct foreign intervention in the internal affairs of Third World nations. Neo-colonialism is rife and, in spite of the coming of political independence, Third World nations find themselves subject to domination from abroad through economic structures and pressures.²⁷

Injustice in the Third World nations is not entirely the result of outside pressures, however. The conference also noted the workings of internal colonialism. Ruling elites are too often indifferent to the subhuman conditions of the majority of their people and their hopes for a better life. In fact, they often block these aspirations while continuing to exploit and oppress the masses. As long as no fundamental changes are made to include these people in a more equal share of national life, the potential for serious conflict will continue to grow.²⁸

In short, the conference was not only concerned with the symptom, war, but also with the cause, injustice. Peace was held to be inseparable from justice. The best way to work for peace was to work

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 137ff.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 140f.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

for justice. The conference called, therefore, for the establishment of the peace that justice brings rather than the peace which is merely the balance of power. It called for the churches to be a part of the movement to establish justice in this world, on both national and international levels.²⁹

The report showed a decided preference, on the part of the conference, for peaceful change. It did, however, take a position against the total exclusion, a priori, of violent revolution as a way to gain change. It was seen as preferable not to use violent revolutionary methods because violence is bad. However, it was seen as permissible, if all peaceful methods to obtain justice failed, to use violence, because it "is the only recourse of those who wish to avoid prolongation of the vast covert violence which the existing order involves."³⁰

The conference examined the question of racism. It went on record against all forms of discrimination. It urged us Christians to oppose the myths of racial superiority, to work for changing the structures of society that support discrimination and prevent those being discriminated against from enjoying an equal share of the rights enjoyed by the rest of society, and to clean out such discrimination from within our Christian communities and our churches at all levels.³¹

Technology is the last important theme in the report, related to liberation, that I would like to refer to. The conference viewed technology in a favourable light. It was aware that technology can be

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 151.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 143.

³¹*Ibid.*, p. 175.

abused and be a dehumanising factor in life but held that, if properly used, technology can be a great force for good. It saw technology as God's gift to be used in the liberation of humanity. Christians need to influence the goals of technology so that it becomes a humanising force which

. . . frees man from magic, from material servitude and want, from endemic diseases and hunger, and when it frees man for the new possibilities in leisure, for satisfaction and fulfillment of self, for new forms of creativity.³²

These then are some of the important themes, relating to liberation in the Third World, that the Geneva Conference studied and then called to the attention of the member churches of the WCC. The most important single theme, as I see it, was the question of the purpose and the need of accelerated economic development in the poor nations of the world. Other themes included the role of the state in developing nations, war and peace, racism, revolution and technology. In studying these themes the conference attempted to understand the implications of the revolutions of our day for Christian discipleship. If any one purpose or concern is to be singled out of this welter of issues it is that the conference was concerned with understanding how we Christians can most effectually care for our neighbour in this day of the world neighbourhood.

In evaluating the conference report, I find myself to be very positive toward it. In it I see evidence of a sincere and serious attempt to grapple with the question of the role of Christians in our

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 154f.

present world situation. The major themes that it discussed are, by and large, the burning issues facing the Third World today. The recommendations that it made for consideration by Christians provide important and helpful pointers for Christian action. Not only did it issue a call to obedience but it also offered concrete suggestions for Christian action. Solid research and thinking is reflected in many of the recommendations preferred, which are in agreement with those of some of the very best experts. A call to obedience is made for Christians to concern themselves with the whole man, in all his dimensions and not merely his spiritual dimension. Finally the conference called for the church to confront world structures and institutions. The church, which so far has dealt mainly with human problems on the "micro" level of the individual, small group and local institution, is now called to get a vision of these problems on the "macro" level.³³

Because the conference dealt with so many important issues in a limited amount of time it was unable to go into as great depth as some of the issues would have deserved. The SODEPAX conference, held at Beirut in 1968, went into greater depth on one issue that was dealt with in Geneva, the issue of economic development, possibly the most important issue to be dealt with in any theology of liberation of the Third World. Let us now take a brief look at some of the main points of this report from Beirut.

The report first deals with the question of why Christians

³³*Ibid.*, p. 182.

should be concerned with development. The conference answered this question by saying that it believed God's will for Christians was that they be concerned with development. The major reason was that God has laid the care of our brother on us. "God speaks to us in the demands of our fellowmen for bread, work, health, education--in short, for human dignity and justice."³⁴ The conference added that Christian responsibility for our brother was not merely as persons to other persons but also for the structural violence of unjust political, economic and social structures which perpetuate subhuman conditions. Christianity, therefore, is to promote the dignity of man, and the judgement on us Christians is that we have failed to help man achieve his full well being and dignity.³⁵

The conference expressed concern for man as the whole man. It added that

Our standard is human dignity, human opportunity, human freedom, in short the fully human. We do not claim to know all that is involved in the fully human. We know that we have to learn from experts in all fields of knowledge, and to work with them. But we press for human development (and as part of this, economic and social development) because we believe that man's future is open, and that the future of many men should--and could--be more open than it is at present.³⁶

Christians live in a world of rapid change, change which represents hope for the majority of the peoples of the developing nations. Change is a positive force as it may bring about greater human opportunities and greater human well-being. Yet, though change is taking

³⁴Denys Munby (ed.), *World Development: Challenge to the Churches* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1969), p. 7.

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp.7f.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 9.

place in the world, our church organisations and our political and social institutions often resist it, often to the extent of hindering development. The conference went on record in favour of change, seeing it as evidence of God at work in the world "breaking up the ways of sin, restoring, revivifying, renewing."³⁷ Change for the purpose of achieving more just conditions of life should preferably be non-violent. If, however, the supporters of the status quo block meaningful change, then violent revolution may be used as a last resort.³⁸

The conference saw the main purpose of development, viewed from a Christian perspective, to be the freeing of man from those conditions which prevent the actualising of his God-given potential. It saw development including higher and more equitably distributed consumption of both material and cultural goods and services, and increased opportunities for a fuller life for more and more people. From this perspective the conference saw development to be good.³⁹

The conference was aware that obstacles to development exist both within and without the developing nations. The major obstacles are presented by special interest groups, both domestic and foreign, which desire to continue their privileged status. Other obstacles are attitudes, habits and traditions which are not conducive to change and development. Many unjust international institutions also raise obstacles. International cooperation for development is not what it should be and there is not sufficient acceptance, by the international

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.10f.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

community--the conference is referring here especially to the developed nations--of its wider responsibilities. Some nations which have helped have become disillusioned by the slow progress being made. In most advanced countries the commitment to development is not a great concern. Great expenditure on armaments and defense is. The conference saw all of this only to point to the necessity of more vigorous efforts to accelerate development.⁴⁰

In examining the strategy for development, the report summarises some of the views regarding needs, priorities and policies which are necessary for accelerated development. Regarding growth rate, the conference saw an annual 6 per cent growth rate in G.N.P. as necessary for developing nations. This growth rate would ensure a doubling of per capita income within 25 years. By and large, however, most developing nations have not yet reached this rate of growth. The report notes that these nations bear most of the responsibility for development on their own shoulders and must continue to do so. More intensified effort on their part is necessary, as also is more effective international effort.⁴¹

Regarding agriculture, the major economic activity in most of the Third World, the conference held its progress to be crucial to development. Improvement in a developing nation's economy hinges on its improvement in agricultural productivity. Programmes for the modernisation of agriculture need, therefore, to be given high

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 14f.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 16.

priority.⁴² At the same time action for the slowing down of population growth is essential. Population policies, however, need to be a part of the general development programme rather than an alternative to it.⁴³

Industrial progress should go hand in glove with agricultural progress. Developing nations need to shift from being purely the producers and suppliers of primary products. Technologies need to be developed and applied in a manner appropriate to the conditions obtaining in a given situation and to the available resources. Where labour is abundant, labour-intensive technologies should be developed and used.⁴⁴

Education should be related to the needs of developing nations. Schooling should be suited to the needs of development. Education should be directed at training people so that they can usefully and skillfully involve themselves in the various tasks necessary to promote development. The conference called, therefore, on the many churches in developing nations, which have been pioneers in education, to review their situations and to revise their curriculums with a view to providing for the needs of development of their particular nations.⁴⁵

Finally, the conference recommended that governments of developing nations give concrete expression to their policies of development, preferably in well thought out plans covering specific blocks of

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 20f.

time. Policy needs to be directed towards mobilising financial resources from within the nation, through revamped tax systems and through stimulation of domestic savings. Governments need also to take the initiative in coordinating their development needs with those of regional neighbours. Promotion of regional common markets can be helpful in development.⁴⁶

The conference saw a role for developed nations in this development of Third World nations. It recommended that the developed nations make "unrequited," productive transfers of resources equal to at least 1 per cent, if not more, of their G.N.P. to the developing nations. Private investment needs to be equal to another 1 per cent. Other recommendations for developed nations to pursue included a call for the easing and rescheduling of debt payments; the acceptance of the UNCTAD resolutions on price stabilisation and on the lowering of tariffs so as to provide greater access of processed goods to the markets of developed nations; the increasing of technical assistance; the respecting of the needs and priorities of the developing nations; the giving of higher priority to the needs of developing nations in schemes for international liquidity.⁴⁷

The fourth and final section of the report gives the conference's view of the role of the churches in development. The conference saw the churches aiding development through education, through political action, and through the restructuring of themselves. Education

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 21f.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 4f.

should be aimed at the creation of world citizens "dedicated to the development of the emergent world community," citizens who recognise the existence of world wide society, who understand world problems related to development and some of the possible solutions to those problems.⁴⁸

Political action should be aimed at getting governments to commit themselves to development. The churches can educate its members to the situation and the needs, needs to which they have the power to bring solutions. Christians can lobby and bring pressure to bear on their lawmakers to make a commitment to development.⁴⁹

Finally, the involvement of the churches in development will necessitate a restructuring of the church itself. The aim should be to facilitate the churches' working for justice and development. Increased ecumenical cooperation, a rethinking of the churches' own priorities and commitments, including financial commitment to development, the development of structures for development education, and Christian cooperation with other religious groups and secular social service agencies are just some of the issues that will have to be considered in any such restructuring.⁵⁰

In short the conference called on Christians everywhere, in both developed and developing nations,

to pledge their support to development as a settled commitment, to campaign or lobby for development by all means at their disposal, and to give governments parties, leaders, and agencies no peace until the whole human race can live with reasonable ease and hope in its single planetary home.⁵¹

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 28. ⁴⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 32f. ⁵⁰*Ibid.*, pp.34ff. ⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 6.

I do not have much to say in evaluating this report that I did not say with reference to the Geneva report. This report shows only that the Beirut Conference dealt much more in depth with the question of economic development. I feel that the report is a rather important document for the churches to seriously consider. The issue of economic development is, to my mind, the most burning issue to be considered in any theology of liberation. Most of the facts and recommendations included in the report correspond with some of the best thinking on the subject of development. Finally, the report contains not only a call to the churches to obedience but also offers concrete suggestions for Christian action.

While my evaluation of both reports is positive, I see them suffering from one weakness. They have a tendency to speak in platitudes. This fact becomes even more striking when we compare the tone and language of the reports to the tone and language of the writings of Torres and Morris. They say what I believe to be the right things but in a manner lacking in urgency. This is not to say that such a sense of urgency was absent in both conferences. A reading of some of the addresses delivered at the conferences would dispel such an idea. It is to say, however, that the reports do not convey this sense of urgency as well as they could have done.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In this concluding chapter I will make a few final comments on the writings examined in the preceding chapters, i.e. the writings of Camilo Torres and Colin Morris and the reports of the Geneva and Beirut Conference. Next I will point out what I believe to be two kinds of errors which need to be avoided when Christians involve themselves in the struggle for liberation. After I have done this I will briefly state four of the reasons why I believe the church should be involved in the struggle. Finally, I will propose three ways in which I believe that the church can effectively involve itself in the struggle.

First, a final look at the writings. I consider these writings to be significant contributions towards liberation theology. The reflection involved in them is not merely academic in nature but is related to the realities obtaining in the Third World. These writings represent serious attempts to understand the meaning of the Gospel and the role of Christians in relation to the struggle for the liberation of the peoples of the Third World, for the establishment of justice, and of the peace that justice brings. They represent an attempt to relate to man in his wholeness, in all his dimensions and not merely in his spiritual dimension. God is defined in terms of His action in history much in the same way as the Bible defines God in terms of His activity in the history and reality of Israel.

After having made this positive statement about these writings, it would be fair to say that none of them represents a complete or adequate theology of liberation. In fact they tend to be more akin to descriptions of the church's failure, and calls to obedience and action than to developed theologies of liberation. They better raise the need for a theology of liberation than they answer that need. They serve to emphasise that a theology of liberation is demanded by our times, by the situation which finds the majority of Third World peoples in the slavery of dehumanised, marginalised conditions.

So there is a need for the development of a theology of liberation, for reflection on some of the burning issues facing Christians in the world today. I feel that fruitful reflection can be done on some of the following questions in light of the Third World reality: the Doctrine of Man; the Doctrine of Creation; the problem of evil--with special reference to sin not only on the individual level but also on the level of the structures and institutions of society; the theory of Just Revolution; the meaning of Christian ministry and mission. I would hope along with Joseph Hough, Jr. that "we shift our attention from a hermeneutics that gives us an historical view of faith to one that gives us faith with a grip on history."¹ I would hope that this theology would not become a more academic theology but one that speaks meaningfully to the realities of the Third World.

Such a theology of liberation needs to rise out of and evolve

¹ Joseph C. Hough, Jr., "The Christian, Violence, and Social Change," *Perspective*, X (Spring 1969), 68.

from the attempts of Christians to be obedient to the call of Christ to meet human need. I would very strongly reiterate what we saw when examining the writings of Colin Morris, i.e. that theological reflection is to be done for the purpose of examining critically, in the light of the Gospel, the actions of Christians as they attempt to meet human need. It is not for theology to initiate such action. If I were to diagram what I considered to be the proper ordering of Christian reflection and action, it would be as follows, i.e.

Gospel text -----> obedience -----> theology
rather than as follows

Gospel text -----> theology -----> obedience.

Of course the diagram simplifies what I mean because I believe that the ordering should be in circular, cyclical form, i.e. starting from the text and following through to obedience, theology and back to the text, and so on.

In short, to use the words of James Cone, theology exists

. . . to put into ordered speech the meaning of God's activity in the world, so that the community of the oppressed will recognise that their inner thrust for liberation is not only *consistent* with the gospel but *is* the gospel of Jesus Christ.²

I believe that the church should be involved in the struggle for liberation. There are, however, two ways in which the church should *not* be involved, for I feel them to be in error. The first error is involvement for involvement's sake. I am bothered by those

²James Cone, *A Black Theology of Liberation* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970), p. 17.

who would have Christians rush into action for action's sake, to prove that we are "involved." They see this as the way in which the church is to prove itself to be on the "cutting edge" and hence relevant.

This is not relevance. At worst it is a perversion of the gospel. At best it is a mere using of the institutions and power base of the church for activist ends, ends which though they may be creditable, are being pursued in a manner not necessarily fulfilling the purpose of the church and the call of Christ. Such shallow and frantic activism is

. . . a kind of compulsive investment in social issues. Like any compulsive or driven activity, this response usually defeats its own objectives by a lack of awareness of the complexities, subtleties and ambiguities of the issues involved, and a blindness to crucial inter-personal relationships that are the essence of effective social action.³

We need to steer clear of a version of Pharisaic breast-beating that I would call social pietism, which leads us to contempt of people, the "thank God I'm not like Spiro Agnew" syndrome. We should not revert to the Pharisaic pride of keeping the law--involvement and action--to its very letter and using it as a measuring stick of human worth, something which Christ spoke strongly against. Social action should not degenerate into social pietism. It should not become the justification for Christian existence, but rather something that comes out of that existence. I am against the "let's do social action to prove we are Christian" school. I am leaning rather to the "let's do

³Harvey Seifert and Howard Clinebell, Jr., *Personal Growth and Social Change* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), p. 13.

social action because we are Christian" line of thought.

The other error to which I want to refer the church is promotion of a new form of clericalism. The church is not, and should not assume the role of, the transformer of society. Secular forces are to change and transform society. People in the Third World will achieve their own liberation. The church, instead, has the opportunity to preach hope, peace, justice, and in short the cause of liberation for the oppressed. It has the opportunity to constantly reiterate the Gospel's ideal of justice for all of God's children.⁴

And now, let us look at a few reasons why the church should be involved in the struggle for liberation in the Third World. Firstly, the liberation struggle is a part of the life of the world. Christian men and women, the church, are in and of this world. We are expected to take our part in society along with everyone else. I believe, along with Arnold Come, that "the church will know its own spirit only as it knows the world."⁵ I would also agree when he says that "the gift of the spirit was not for the church itself alone but for the world through the church."⁶ I believe that any thinking, related to Christian life, which negates participation in the life of the world, should be suspect. Christianity is not a personal religion alone, it has

⁴I am indebted to Emilio Castro for this idea. See his paper on "Justice and Peace" delivered at the World Methodist Conference, Denver, 21st August 1971.

⁵Arnold Come, *Agents of Reconciliation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), p. 11.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 132.

implications for the life of the world as well. Thus I would agree with Berdyaev when he says, "If I am a Christian, I must do my best to realise Christian truth in the social as well as the personal life."⁷ Hence, since the Christian life must be related to being a part of the world, and since the liberation struggle in the Third World is a part of the life of the world involving two-thirds of the world's peoples, I believe that the church should relate itself to this struggle.

A second reason for church involvement in the liberation struggle, as I see it, stems from a doctrine of man which includes the whole man, which includes all the dimensions of man. The church has traditionally related to the spiritual dimension of man and has tended to forget that man also has historical, material and social dimensions. He is not a pure spirit. Thus when we speak of the humanisation of man, we should consider not only his spiritual health, but also his physical, material, psychological and social well-being. The liberation struggle is aimed at the freeing of man to fulfill his potentialities, to realise his humanity in all its dimensions. It is aimed at removing the conditions of dehumanisation, conditions which prevent man from fulfilling his potentiality, from enjoying and developing all the aspects of his humanity. I believe that the liberation struggle, like the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is aimed at the humanisation of man. Hence I believe that the church should relate itself to this struggle for liberation. Simply put, I believe (to paraphrase words, attributed

⁷N. Berdyaev, *Destiny of Man* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 221.

to Mahatma Gandhi, that I remember hearing as a child) that "To the hungry God is food, To the naked God is clothes, To the homeless God is shelter." Or to use the words in the Gospel of Luke that were in turn originally taken from Isaiah,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering
of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are
oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.
Luke 4:18, 19 (R.S.V.)

Thirdly, I believe that the church should be involved in the liberation struggle of the Third World peoples because I am concerned with caring for my brother, and that this should be true of all Christians. God has laid on us the responsibility of caring for our brother. This responsibility implies effectual caring, not mere well-wishing. Action is an integral part of caring. Our brother in the Third World is crying out to us in pain, the pain caused by hunger, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, abject poverty, low life expectancy, lack of clothing and decent shelter and other dehumanising conditions of life. Since we have responsibility for our brother's well-being it becomes incumbent on us as Christians to make efforts to alleviate and remove these dehumanising conditions. Well-wishing is not effectual caring. Neither is charity. Charity at worst is conscience offering, a way of buying off our guilty feelings. At best it is only a stop gap measure to patch up a bad situation. What rather needs to be done, if our caring is to be effectual, is the removal of those conditions, those structures and institutions, which cause him pain in the first place. This attacks the causes of his pain rather than just

the symptom. Since the liberation struggle in the Third World is aimed at the end of ensuring the well-being of its peoples and since Christian caring for our brother implies our desire that his well-being be ensured, I believe that the church should be involved in the struggle.

The final reason, for Christian involvement in the liberation struggle, is that our ministry is a ministry of reconciliation. Dehumanised conditions and situations of injustice point to a state of alienation between brothers. Jesus died, at the hands of oppressive forces, to redeem man, to bring reconciliation between man and God and between man and his neighbour. In the struggle between good and evil, Jesus did not compromise but took His position over against the evil. The church too is called on to take a stand against evil. It is only if it takes such a stand, on the part of the oppressed against the forces of oppression, that the church can be a genuine agent of reconciliation. The presence of unjust conditions points to the presence of alienation. It is only when these unjust conditions are removed that alienation will be removed and reconciliation will become possible. Since the liberation struggle is aimed at removing injustice, injustice that gives rise to alienation, and since our ministry is one of reconciliation, reconciliation which becomes possible only when the causes of alienation are removed, I believe that Christians can properly fulfill their ministry by involving themselves in the liberation struggle of the peoples of the Third World.

I will now propose three ways in which I believe the church can effectively involve itself in the struggle. The first and, to my

mind, the most important way in which the church can involve itself in the struggle for liberation is in education. I have two kinds of education in mind. The first is education aimed at the formation of a public opinion which understands and supports the struggle. The second is education aimed at the training of citizens of Third World nations in skills needed for development. A short word about each kind.

Education for the formation of public opinion is to be done both in the developed and the developing nations. In the appendix I will give an educational model for use in the local church in the United States of America. The objective of this model, or of any model in the developed nations, should be the education of people towards building a just world neighbourhood. It should educate the people to realise the concept of world brotherhood, the oneness of the people of the world. It should make them aware of the injustice and inequality in the world and introduce them to that part of the world, the Third World, where most of the dehumanising conditions are to be found. It will show how some of these conditions operate, how they are caused and perpetuated and also how the developed nations relate to these problem conditions. Solutions to the problems will be suggested, as will the possible ways in which the developed nations may help and be related to these solutions. The relation of Christians to these problems will also be examined by discussing the implications of Christian belief and ethics for action directed at these problems. It is hoped that out of such education will emerge persons who have sensitivity to and knowledge of the Third World and its problems and

the path of action to establish more just conditions.

The objective of education in developing nations would include much of the same. It should, however, mainly focus on *conscientizaci3n*, the bringing into the awareness of the people of these nations, their condition of life and the fact that they have the ability to cause change. In communicating with some friends from Latin America, I have been informed that this type of education is assuming greater and greater importance there. Revolution for change has been losing support because there is a growing feeling that education of the masses, though slower than revolution, will prove more effective and far reaching. Revolutionary change is change from the top and hence it does not permeate into the grassroots and take hold. Education, however, builds from the bottom up; hence it will permeate further and prove more effective in the long run.

The church can also help in educating Third World peoples in specific skills necessary for development. The church has been a pioneer in education in many parts of the Third World. It needs to review this education and revise it if necessary to educate more effectively people in the skills their countries need.

To be effective in such educational programmes, it will be necessary for the church to be a researcher and information gatherer, for education is usually more effective when the facts and information used are correct and current. New and more effective means of communication need also to be developed.

The second way in which the church can join the struggle for

liberation is through political action. The type of political structure in a particular nation will determine the kind of political action that is possible. I visualise such action on both the individual Christian level and on the institutional church level. Where avenues for peaceful meaningful change exist I see Christians bringing pressure to bear on the appropriate points, on the appropriate governmental agencies, so as to express their views about injustices and the necessity for change. The ballot box and the lobby are two important ways in which Christians can influence governments to persuade them to promote justice and development. In developing nations this would mean the institution of reforms, and even of some basic changes, aimed at facilitating the humanisation of their citizens. In developed nations this would mean the institution of programmes of greater and more effective transfer of capital and technical assistance to the developing nations, and the institution of reforms in the trade mechanisms so as to make the terms of trade more favourable to the developing nations and to make for greater stability in these terms.

In political structures where channels for democratically inspired changes do not exist, there are still methods, though less direct ones, by which influence can be brought to bear on government and its agencies. There are some societies, however, where no peaceful means for achieving change exist. In these situations I see violent revolution as being permissible for those who in good conscience are not willing to accept any longer the structures of injustice and dehumanisation which perpetrate great violence. I have already dealt

with this question at greater length in Chapter III.

Finally, I see the church involving itself in the struggle for liberation in the Third World through a restructuring of itself. I believe that whatever restructuring is done should be done to ensure the survival and humanisation of the oppressed and not to ensure the survival of the church. I believe it is time that the church place its faith in God rather than in solvency, property, bank accounts, reserves and investments. I believe that the church, if it is to be true to its purpose, should devote its attention to practising compassion instead of building and strengthening solvency. The church possesses wealth, i.e. more resources than it needs for its day to day operation, and I would advocate the use of that wealth in programmes directed toward the development and humanisation of the oppressed of the earth.

Institutional reform and restructuring should go beyond this. The church should establish structures, and fund them, to educate both its own members and the wider society in the meaning of responsible citizenship. It should also have structures which are devoted to research and collection of data connected with the problems of development, and the whole range of phenomena associated with the liberation struggle.

Christian agencies that are already involved in development, social change, and the struggle for justice should be reviewed to see how they can be made more effective. Ecumenical cooperation and liaison needs to be encouraged. Liaison and cooperation with other

governmental and social agencies needs also to be encouraged.

Finally, where services that are necessary are not already provided for, the church should attempt to provide them. This should not, however, be done as a permanent thing but only until some other agency, social or governmental, can provide these services adequately. I look forward to the day where the church will not need to provide such services and instead can wholly devote itself in good conscience to purely spiritual affairs.

Until that time, however, when justice is established through the liberation of the peoples, not only of the Third World, but of the whole world, the church has its task cut out. It has to become more involved in the struggle for liberation in whatever way possible. It needs to inspire and educate and, on occasion, prod its members to go out into the world to practise the Gospel of love and service of God and neighbour. It needs to encourage Christians everywhere to work for liberation, to work for the establishment of justice and the peace that such justice brings.

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APPENDIX

THE CHURCH AND LIBERATION IN THE THIRD WORLD:
AN EDUCATIONAL MODEL FOR USE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Introduction

This model has been primarily designed for use in the local church in the United States. Its purpose is to promote in Christians a greater consciousness and understanding of the Third World situation. It is intended to provoke serious reflection about some of the problems facing most Third World nations and possible solutions to these problems. Finally, this model is constructed in such a way as to continually ask the question of us Christians, "What are the implications of our understandings of the Third World situation for Christian action?"

One reason for designing this model primarily for use in the United States is that I am writing my dissertation for an American seminary. Another is that I see the United States, and other developed nations for that matter, to be both part of some problems of the Third World, and of the solutions to those problems. This model can be adapted for use in local churches in nations other than the U.S.A. Wherever this model, or adaptations of it, or models similar to it, is used, it is my hope that those participating will emerge with a greater consciousness of the Third World and of their role as Christians in dealing with various problems that the Third World faces in its fight for liberation, for the establishment of Justice and Peace.

It must be noted that this model is only a survey course. It does not go into great depth on any one topic, nor does it pretend to include every single topic of importance. In fact many of the subjects

included could fruitfully be studied singly, in depth, over a period of weeks. The course is directed, rather, towards introducing its participants to a constellation of some of the important subjects involved in the Third World situation so that they can get an overall, preliminary introduction to it. Further in depth study of particular subjects is a possibility for those so interested.

The Model Course of Education about the Third World

For the Leader:

The course is divided into seven sections. The first section is introductory in nature while the remaining six sections include the content of the course. Each of these sections is divided into two units, with the exception of the introduction which is one unit. We thus have a total of thirteen units. It will thus be convenient to run the course on a quarterly basis, i.e., over a thirteen week period. The class members may decide the breakdown of their meetings according to their convenience. It is expected, however, that they meet for at least one session per week, per unit, each session being of a duration of between two and three hours.

The enrollment in the class should be limited to approximately fifteen people. This is to ensure greater opportunity for group participation as the format is essentially that of a seminar. Since lectures are to be kept at a minimum it will be necessary to assign some home preparation. Minimum requirements will not be very extensive, i.e., a short paper or two or three chapters of a book at the most.

Commitment to this minimal preparation by the group members is a must. The leader of the course will need to do more extensive research and preparation so that he could act as a resource person, aiding the group by supplying facts when necessary or introducing additional ideas for discussion. Calling in of an outside expert to act as an additional resource person on a particular unit is a further possibility. It is important, however, to stress that his or her role is one of a resource person only, not of a lecturer. Or alternatively, the group may choose to rotate the leadership from unit to unit and the group leader could then fulfill the role of convenor and resource person.

Section I. Beyond Parochialism

Objective:

The objective of this introductory section is to establish the expectations, both of leader and participants, of the course. Why study the Third World in the first place? The discussion of this question should be tied in with the Christian view of the Universal Brotherhood of man. It should be directed towards understanding the interdependence of all the peoples of the world.

For the Leader:

The leader should read Barbara Ward's book, *The Lop-Sided World* (New York: Norton, 1968) paying special attention to chapters two and six. The book as a whole examines the fact that the world is in an unbalanced state where there is a huge gap between the rich and poor nations. The rich nations, comprising 20 per cent of the world's

population, control 80 per cent of its wealth while the poor nations, or 80 per cent of the world's population, control only 20 per cent of its wealth. Furthermore, this lopsidedness is growing greater.

In chapter two Miss Ward discusses the concept of universal brotherhood, a concept which has risen out of the Judeo-Christian heritage. Love of neighbour is the cornerstone of this concept. Beyond the obvious, superficial differences men all over the world are of one family. Christians by and large, however, have not actualised or practised this concept. Miss Ward feels that this concept has become more important and meaningful because of the shrinking of the world into a neighbourhood because of our increased efficiency in communications.

In chapter six Miss Ward observes that the growing closeness of the world neighbourhood has not brought about correspondingly greater concern or equity between the peoples of the world. The West, instead, has grown richer at the expense of the poor nations. Miss Ward calls for greater positive involvement, for acceptance of responsibility by the rich nations, across their frontiers, in the establishing of a less lopsided, more equitable world, and hence of a more just and peaceful world.

The Class Session:

The leader will convene the group and briefly state his view of the purpose of the course. He will then encourage the group members to express their own views. Discuss the various views presented. The discussion should be in the light of the concept of universal

brotherhood, of world neighbourhood.

The group will next break up into sub-groups of three or four persons each. They will have the task to make three lists. The first list has two parts, i.e. a list of items that the U.S.A. imports from overseas and a list of items that it exports overseas. In the process the class will get a picture of the world's economic interdependence. The second list also has two parts and should list the activities and commitments of the denomination, to which the group belongs, both at home and abroad. Focus thinking on the differences in foreign and domestic involvement that may become apparent from the lists. The third list, in two parts, should contain the activities and commitments of the group's own local church at home and abroad. They are again to observe the differences apparent from comparing the lists. Underscore the contradictions between the Christian concept of universal brotherhood and picture that the lists show. I am making the assumption that foreign involvement will be minimal in comparison to domestic involvement.

The sub-groups will next cut pictures from magazines, provided by the leader, and make collages to illustrate their understandings of universal brotherhood. When this is done the whole group should reassemble and share and discuss their lists and collages.

Before breaking up, finalise class mechanics such as frequency of meetings, days and times, leadership functions if there will be floating leadership and any other pertinent questions. Make homework assignments.

Section II. What is the Third World?

Objective:

To focus thinking on what the group is going to study in the course. It will try to come to tentative definitions of concepts such as the Third World, development, developing nation, etc.

For the Leader:

The leader should read Part One, "The Study of the Third World" in C. R. Hensman's book, *From Gandhi to Guevara* (London: Penguin Press, 1969); Chapter One, "What is the Third World?" and Appendix A in Irving L. Horowitz' book, *Three Worlds of Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Chapter One, "The Development Issue" in Jan Tinbergen's book, *Development Planning* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967).

Hensman grapples with the question as to whether there is a Third World and defines it as a world which is not a member of either the Western or Soviet power blocs. This world corresponds, roughly, to the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America and includes the so-called developing nations of the world. Hensman also attempts to search for the historical contexts of the Third World in order to understand the shaping of the present forces acting in the Third World. It is a world breaking away from colonial dominance and eager to maintain its independence from cold war alliances. It is non-aligned in the main. Hensman is determined to underline the otherness of the Third World, i.e. that it is not an extension of the power, values and

interests of greater Europe.

Horowitz also gives a good definition and description of the Third World. He first defines the First World as being the nations of Western Europe and North America. The Second World includes the nations of Eastern Europe, the Russian orbit. The Third World is comprised of those nations which belong to neither of the first two blocs, i.e. the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America which have recently become independent from colonial rule. The Third World generally draws on the First World for its technology and on the Second World for its ideology. There is some similarity between Horowitz and Hensman but the difference merit reading both.

Tinbergen's chapter raises questions related to the development issue and is useful to begin our thinking on development. He first portrays the differences between rich and poor nations and then gives a good portrait of a poor country. He raises up the need for development and discusses some of the factors necessary for development. He does not see a stable world situation being possible with the present reality of a world divided into haves and have nots, where the haves are growing even richer. He sees development of the poor nations and the removal of this stark contrast as one way to alleviate the problems of poverty and the threat of conflict.

Minimum reading for the group participants should be pages 70-73 from Hensman, which lists the characteristics of the Third World; Appendix A, from Horowitz, which is a digest of factors defining the Three Worlds, section no. 2 of Chapter 1 of Tinbergen, entitled

"Common Characteristics of the Underdeveloped Countries."

The Class Sessions

Unit: What is the Third World?

Discuss the readings as they relate to this question. Define the Three Worlds and discuss their characteristics. Making a comparative chart will be helpful here. Use a world map and label various nations according to these three types. Emphasise that the First World nations generally have a capitalist economy, a polity that is usually parliamentary democracy, it is highly urbanised, industrialised, and has great mobility. Its main religion is Christianity and racially it is white. The Second World is communist. The economy is socialist. Its polity is democratic centralism. It is also highly urbanised and industrialised though somewhat less so than the First World. The predominant religion is Christianity and racially it also is white. The Third World is non-aligned. Its economy is mixed with public and private sectors and shows a tendency towards socialism. Agriculture is the major activity. Industrialisation is taking place, but accounts for a very small part of national occupational activity. The polity is also mixed but democratic ideals are usually important. Rapid urbanisation is taking place. Mobility is low. Predominant religions include Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, etc. and Christianity is minority religion except for Latin America and scattered cases in Africa and Asia. Racially coloured.

Unit: What is a Developing Nation? What is Development?

Discussion can start off from the Tinbergen reading. It would be helpful to choose a particular country and have the discussion in light of some of its realities. A citizen from that country will be a useful resource person. Emphasis should be placed on past colonial experience, the present political set up, major problems and needs for development. Wrestle with the question of development in specific relation to specific problems of the country chosen. Comparison with the United States' own developmental history, including some of the difficulties it faced, will also be helpful. Discourage the attitude which says "If they only would do it our way." Emphasise that solutions to problems have to fit the particular context. Mere copying of American methods, for example, may not be helpful and in fact may even cause harm. Emphasise that development is not equal to aping either the First or Second Worlds.

Section III. Some Facets of the Development ProblemObjective:

With this preliminary understanding of the Third World, the objective is now to go into greater depth in certain specific problems. The group members need to sense the enormous difficulties facing developing nations. Key focus in this section will be on the problem of hunger.

For the Leader:

Obtain the film "Cry the Beloved Country." Preview the film

and isolate the major problems portrayed in it. An indictment of South African racism is the main message of this film. Be aware of this but also be aware of the many other Third World problems that the film shows so vividly such as unemployment, exploitation of the masses, urbanisation, industrialisation, poverty, cultural imperialism, the impact of Western ways of life and Western values on the African way of life, and finally on the lack of church action towards obtaining justice.

Read Josué de Castro's book, *The Black Book of Hunger* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967). In this book de Castro examines the problem of hunger in the context of economics, politics and humane philosophy. He includes extensive documentation and conveys a sense of the urgency of this problem. He also makes some constructive proposals for facing the problem. He argues that hunger is at the root of most conflict and until the problem is favourably solved the danger of hunger sparking world conflagration is great. Birth control is seen as an unsatisfactory approach to solving the problem. Instead of concentrating resources on preventing births, we need to work to adequately feed those who are now alive. Agrarian reform and greater emphasis on agriculture will bring about a revolution in food production. International cooperation is vital. He suggests that the rich nations which spend \$140 billion annually in arms, to protect themselves from world conflict, could spend a fraction of that amount to aid agricultural progress and thus remove hunger, the most probable spark of such conflict.

Minimum reading for class participants is the first chapter of de Castro's book.

The Class Sessions

Unit: "Cry the Beloved Country."

The group should view the film. After a brief break, discuss the film and emphasise the major problems of development that it portrays. These points of emphasis are spelled out in the leader's instructions.

Unit: The Problem of Hunger

Begin the discussion by examining the de Castro reading. Points to emphasise are a definition of nutrition--malnutrition in terms of calorie and protein consumption; problems associated with malnutrition, including disease, mental retardation, high mortality rates and the effects of all of these on development; the relation of population to food availability; is population control the best way to alleviate hunger? Is it of primary or secondary importance?* Compare and contrast food consumption in the rich and poor nations and question the implications of this; discuss the relation of the world economic imbalance to hunger; discuss expenditure on armaments and the possibilities of reapportionment of some of the resources so used to development.

*When discussing population control emphasise that though it is important, it should not take the place of improvement in agricultural production. Both need to go together.

To heighten and dramatise hunger have the group experience a typical eating day in most of the Third World. Eat a common meal together consisting of a single bowl of rice or of beans or of a slice of bread and water. This should be the only meal of the day. Discuss how this feels. Try to project how it might feel if this were the situation over periods of months and years.

Section IV. Facets of the Development Problem (Continued)

Objective:

Same as for Section III. Key points of focus will be on poverty and some of its characteristics and on the gap between rich and poor nations and on trade and aid.

For the Leader:

Reread Barbara Ward's, *The Lop-Sided World*. Make copies of the charts on pp. 106-110, these to be handed to group participants for their use. Also read Harry Magdoff's, *The Age of Imperialism* (New York: Modern Reader Paperback, 1969) and Kwame Nkrumah's, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1966). There will be a spillover of the last two books into Section V.

Magdoff shows how the U.S.A. has an economic empire in the world and how foreign policy decisions are greatly influenced by the desire to protect this empire and even have it grow further. U.S. interests are all over the world and have a stranglehold on the world markets, not to mention their control over the internal affairs of many

sovereign nations. Profits of U.S. multinational corporations overseas are many times higher than levels acceptable in the U.S.A. Aid is exposed as a fraud. It is drawn from the tax dollar and most of it ends up in the coffers of the big U.S. businesses rather than benefiting the recipient nations to the fullest possible extent. In fact the outflow of money to the U.S.A. from aid receiving countries is greater than the inflow of U.S. investment and aid. Aid is hence good business for the U.S.A. Magdoff also shows how aid is wielded as a control tool by the U.S. over recipient nations.

Nkrumah's book repeats some of the assertions made by Magdoff but is worth reading because it covers other things as well. It is an excellent work on neo-colonialism. Nkrumah gives us a good definition of this term, a term used so commonly by Third World leaders. Neo-colonialism is a state of affairs in which a nation is theoretically independent and sovereign but in reality is controlled economically, and hence politically, from the outside. Power is exerted through economic pressures. The world economy is geared for the benefit of the rich nations. The exploitation of the Third World goes on unabated in spite of political independence. The world market is controlled by the rich nations hence, whenever there is any increase in production of primary products, the world prices go down and the poor nations do not reap added rewards for their progress.

Class assignments should be a study of the charts from Miss Ward's book and a reading of Chapter 4 of Magdoff's book on "Aid and Trade."

Class Sessions:Unit: World Poverty. The Gap between Rich and Poor Nations.

Begin the discussion by encouraging various definitions of poverty and examining these definitions. Use Miss Ward's charts to get a feel for the world poverty situation. Discuss the meaning of poverty for the American context. Distinguish between this poverty, which could be called relative poverty, and the poverty characteristic of people in the Third World, which could be called survival poverty. American poverty in this situation is affluence in comparison to most Third World poverty. Examine some of the characteristics of poverty, for these are the facts of life for most Third World peoples, such as malnutrition, unemployment, disease, illiteracy, poor shelter, low life expectancy, etc.

Next discuss the gap between the rich and poor nations and emphasise the fact that the gap is growing further. Give statistics. Draw on readings from previous sections to fuel the discussion. Discuss Miss Ward's proposal that some of the methods used in rich nations to equalise between rich and poor, such as income taxes, welfare, etc., should be used beyond national frontiers to equalise between rich and poor nations.

Unit: Trade and Aid for Development

Capital is needed for development. Capital is usually scarce in Third World nations as is foreign exchange which is so necessary for the purchase of goods and services not locally available. The

major way in which such capital is to be obtained is through trade and aid.

In discussing aid emphasise that aid should be a handlift rather than a handout. Steer clear of charity and paternalism. Emphasise that some of the record regarding aid is good but also that much has been bad. Draw the Magdoff and Nkrumah readings regarding aid into the discussion. Define terms such as aid with strings, bilateral and multilateral aid, military aid, economic aid, soft loans, hard loans, etc. Emphasise the misuse of aid as a tool of foreign policy and as a way of subsidising U.S. business. Emphasise the importance of multilateral aid through international agencies such as the United Nations.

Trade earnings bring developing countries roughly four-fifths of their foreign exchange earnings while aid and investment bring roughly only one-fifth. Emphasise this fact as proof that the Third World Nations are footing most of the bill for development. Aid only foots part of this bill. Discuss the intention of the slogan, "More trade not aid," i.e. that if trade terms were improved and if Third World trade earnings were given protection and support, then aid would not be as necessary.

Section V. Facets of the Development Problem (Continued)

Objective:

Same as for Sections III and IV. Key point of focus will be an examination of the concept of neo-colonialism and of the way it works.

For the Leader:

Obtain Pontecorvo's film "Burn" starring Marlon Brando. Preview the film. Reread the Nkrumah book.

"Burn" illustrates neo-colonialism operating in an island of the Antilles in the 19th century. This island gains its freedom from Portugal with some British help. A British company takes over the monopoly of the island's major product and export, sugar cane. The company grows in power and uses its economic power to obtain political leverage over the supposedly sovereign island's government. Dissidents, unhappy at the government's complicity with the British, begin a movement against the government's policy and this movement finally takes to the hills for guerilla warfare. Britain sends in its troops to help crush the movement and help the government reexert its control. The movement is partially crushed but in the process the government becomes even more subject to the British neo-colonialists and the land is laid to waste with their 'search and destroy' strategy.

Minimum assignment is reading Nkrumah's book's Introduction. It will be sufficient to give the participants a good definition and understanding of the concept of neo-colonialism.

Class Sessions:Unit: "Burn"

Have the group view the film. After a brief break discuss the film. Are there parallels between what is portrayed in the film and the development of U.S. involvement in Viet Nam, and in the so-called

banana republics of Latin America? Is there any similarity between the British Sugar Company and the United Fruit Company, for example?

Unit: Neo-Colonialism

Begin the discussion on the basis of the reading from Nkrumah and from incidents in the film of the previous week. Ask the questions What is neo-colonialism? How does it operate? How does it hinder development? Does it encourage and facilitate exploitation of the nation subject to it by the one exercising the controls? The present assertion that I.T.T. was involved in trying to influence the Presidential election in Chile so as to protect its interests from possible nationalisation could provide useful grist for the mill. Do such things happen? The leader may also cite other examples given in Nkrumah's book.

Section VI. The Church and Liberation

Objective:

To examine the role of Christianity in the revolutions of our time. What is Christian humanisation in the Third World reality? Does the traditional conception of Christian mission speak to the realities of our day and age? There will be an examination of the church's successes and failures as it relates to liberation in the Third World.

For the Leader:

Obtain the National Council of Churches' film "TAUW." Preview the film. Read Colin Morris' book, *Include Me Out* (Nashville:

Abingdon, 1968). Also read "Manifesto to the Nation," a manifesto of the Bolivian Methodist Church delivered to the people and President of the Republic of Bolivia, Easter, March 29th, 1970.

"TAUW" is set in Dakar, Senegal. Tauw is the name of a young man whose living situation and problems is the subject of the film. He is unemployed in spite of many attempts to find a job. His family is poor and he clashes with his father and his values which are characteristic of the old tribal ways. Tauw's values are those of the new generation of a newly independent, modernising nation. The film gives us a brief picture of life in the city of Dakar and makes us aware of some development problems. Tauw's religion, Islam, as it is practised by the family and their teacher does not speak to the reality of life in Dakar and instead is concerned with the purely spiritual dimension and with perpetuating its institutions while its believers live in subhuman conditions.

Morris' book is an indictment of the major part of Christian theology and activity. He states that they are not directed towards facing the real issues of present reality, issues which rise out of the struggle of real people to survive in subhuman conditions. The church instead is worried about its own survival and all its activities are directed to this end rather than to the end of ensuring the survival of the dispossessed of the world. In the long run, feels Morris, what will stand up as significant of the church's activity will be creative acts of compassion, not liturgy, architecture or theology.

The manifesto is an attempt by the Bolivian Church to define

itself and its reason for existence which is seen as men's humanisation. This humanisation is to be on all dimensions, not purely the spiritual one. It then gives a picture of the Bolivian reality, which is rife with dehumanisation, and specifically points to major factors in the picture. The church then commits itself to involvement in the constructive actions with the end of bringing about the full humanisation of Bolivia's people. It recounts some of its actions to this end and says what it will continue to do in the future.

Minimum reading assignment for the class members is the manifesto. For those who have the time, the Morris book can also be recommended.

Class Sessions:

Unit: TAUW: The Failure of the Church

View the film. Discuss the film and the role religion played in Tauw's situation. Did his religion speak constructively to his reality? Emphasise that the film is not an indictment of Islam alone; that the Christian church is equally guilty. Discuss whether Marx was correct in accusing religion of being the opiate of the people.

Next bring Morris' theses into the discussion. Discuss whether the church has been more interested in its institutional survival than in the humanisation and survival of the world's dispossessed peoples. Is evangelism, is speaking only to man's spiritual dimension the mission of the church? Discuss the view of the whole man.

In this session look mainly at the negative side of the church's performance.

Unit: Towards a Theology of Liberation

The church has done some things towards the humanisation and liberation of the peoples in the Third World. Look at some of these. What else can Christians do in addition to these? Using the manifesto as the basis for discussion emphasise that there is a growing sense of the need for theology to be a theology of liberation, liberation of the whole man rather than merely his spiritual dimension. Mission needs to be seen in a wider perspective than as mere evangelism. The church's mission is to the whole person and not to parts of his totality.

Section VII. Manifesto to the Local Church

Objective:

To have the group develop its own theology of liberation. To have the group make concrete suggestions for Christian involvement in the Third World. The group will then pass these on to the wider constituency of the local church for study and action.

For the Leader:

Reread the "Manifesto to the Nation" of the Bolivian Methodist Church. Read Part I of Denys Munby's *World Development: Challenge to the Churches* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1969).

Munby gives the Official Report of the SODEPAX Conference held in Beirut in 1968. The conference considered the problem of development and attempts to speak to Christians about our responsibility as our brother's keeper. For peace and justice to be established, the gap between the haves and have nots must be closed and social injustice

must be removed. Christians are urged to lobby their government's to accept these facts and to act on them.

Minimum assignment for the group is the same as that for the Leader.

Class Sessions:

Unit: Constructing a Manifesto to the Local Church

This is a workshop session, in which the group will draw on what they have learned in the course of their study of the Third World, to construct a statement of the group's theology as it relates to humanisation and liberation in the Third World. The question at the basis of this statement is, "What, in the context of the Third World, do liberation and humanisation mean?" The group can make use of the Bolivian manifesto as a model to work from.

Unit: A Call to Action

This is also a workshop session. The group will construct a list of specific suggestions for action, action aimed at aiding the process of liberation and humanisation in the Third World. The SODEPAX report can be used as a source of ideas.

This list, along with the manifesto of the previous session, is to be communicated to the wider constituency of the local church.

Finally, either during this session, or at home after the course ends, individual participants should be asked to evaluate the course. They should note the strengths and weaknesses in content, mode of presentation, readings, etc. and make suggestions for improvement.